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JOHN CARVER

A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS

BY

HENRY WILLIAM CHARLES BLOCK.

AUTHOR'S EDITION.

Published also in London by
Philip Middleton Justice, 55 and 56 Chancery Lane.

JOHN CARVER

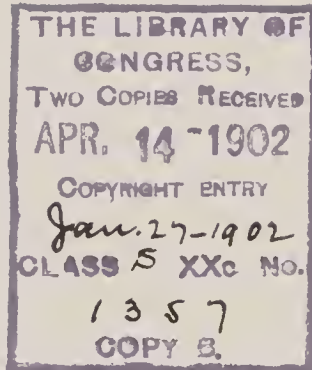
A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS

By HENRY WILLIAM CHARLES BLOCK,
St. Louis, Missouri, U. S. A.

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*Dedicated to the memory of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing,
the Interpreter of the Dramatic Rules of Aristotle.*

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

JOHN CARVER, proprietor of a book-store.

MRS. CARVER, his wife.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER, their son.

ALFRED RECTOR, an attorney.

RICHEY, president of the Standard Gas-Light Company.

ELLA RICHEY, his daughter.

MARY RICHEY, his sister.

FERRY, a skilled mechanic.

MRS. FERRY, his wife.

DEVLIN, *alias* DICKSON, a real estate agent and ward politician.

MEACHAM, an attorney and political boss.

BURKE, }
MEYER, } partners in a bakery business.

WILEY, President of a Street Railway Company, and a stockholder in the Standard Gas Light Company.

SMITH, editor and proprietor of "The Daily Record."

TOMMY, his office-boy.

PLOWMAN, a blacksmith.

ANNIE PLOWMAN, his daughter.

TIPPS, a saloon-keeper, and member of the City Council.

O'FINNIGAN, a hanger-on in Tipps' saloon.

MAGGIE, a servant in the Richey household.

JOHANNA WACKER, a servant in Meyer's family.

MRS. JONES, a washer-woman.

KETCHUM, captain of the Dickson Guards.

SKINNER, a ward-heeler.

GALLAGHER, a policeman.

A CLERK.

CITIZENS and POLICEMEN.

SCENE—A City in the Mississippi Valley.

TIME—The Present.

JOHN CARVER.

ACT I.

SCENE I—CARVER'S book-store. The street entrance is at the rear of the stage; there is a door to the right, near the front, and shelves filled with books run along the walls. Counters to the right and to the left, and tables in the center, are partly covered with books and papers. At the front of the stage to the right, a safe, and a desk, with a portrait hanging over it, stand against the wall. Several chairs are placed about the store.

TIME—Early in the evening on a day in the middle of March, about two weeks before the City elections.

MRS. CARVER sits near the desk, sewing.

MRS. CARVER.

Oh dear, oh dear, that mortgage worries me;—it doesn't bother John, and I'm glad of it. (*Looking at a bouquet of violets in a vase on the desk.*) These violets he gave me to-day. How happy they can make us,—little things,—

Enter RECTOR.

RECTOR.

Is your husband home, Mrs. Carver?

MRS. CARVER.

No, Mr. Rector; he went to see Mr. Fox to pay him the semi-annual interest on the mortgage. You know that mortgage—

RECTOR.

Yes, I recollect; it was an unfortunate affair.

MRS. CARVER.

I was afraid right from the beginning, when young Spenser became a clerk in the railroad office, and John signed his bond.

RECTOR.

And to redeem Spenser's shortage, your house had to be mortgaged. Let me see, the mortgage will run out soon.

MRS. CARVER.

On September 15th, but Mr. Fox agreed to have it extended.

Enter ELLA RICHEY, stepping to the counter to the left.

MRS. CARVER

(*to* RECTOR). Excuse me.

RECTOR.

Certainly.

MRS. CARVER *goes behind the counter to the left.*

MRS. CARVER.

Miss Richey.

ELLA RICHEY.

The works of Longfellow, if you please.
I want them for a birthday present.

MRS. CARVER

(taking a book from a shelf, and handing it to MISS RICHEY). Will this answer?

ELLA RICHEY.

Yes, Mrs. Carver. *(She returns the book to Mrs. Carver, who wraps it in paper.)*

MRS. CARVER

(as ELLA RICHEY places a bill on the counter). Thank you.

Enter MRS. FERRY with a newspaper.

MRS. FERRY.

There's something in "The Daily Record" this evening. It's too bad.

MRS. CARVER.

Has anything happened?

RECTOR.

What's the matter, Mrs. Ferry?

MRS. FERRY

(*going to RECTOR, the other two ladies following*). Just listen. (*Reading from the newspaper.*) "A poor woman named Mrs. Jouby, living at 200 River Street, was arrested this evening, charged with larceny. She had a preliminary hearing, and was held for the grand jury. Being unable to furnish bond for five hundred dollars, she was lodged in jail. She had left her four weeks old baby in the care of her other children, the oldest of whom is but nine years of age. Late in the afternoon the neighbors heard the cries of the children,

and when they called at the house, the baby was nearly dead." (*In a choked voice.*) "A couple of ladies took charge of the infant, and carried it to the jail."

RECTOR

(*taking the paper from MRS. FERRY*). If you please. (*As he reads on, the listeners are visibly affected.*) "But the sheriff positively refused to allow the child to be taken to its mother, claiming that he was not permitted to receive infants. The anguish of the poor mother was heart-rending. The ladies could do nothing, and took the baby back to its home, where one of them now remains with it. The most distressing circumstance is the fact that the child is entirely dependent on its mother for nourishment."

ELLA RICHEY.

How pitiful!

MRS. CARVER.

They must be helped.

RECTOR

(*to MRS. CARVER as he lays the paper on the desk*). I'll go there, and will be back shortly. (*Bowing*) Good evening, ladies. (*In departing he makes another bow to MISS RICHEY, which the latter returns. Exit RECTOR.*)

A customer enters, and MRS. CARVER goes behind the counter to wait on him.

ELLA RICHEY

(*to MRS. FERRY*). Who was that gentleman?

MRS. FERRY

(*to ELLA RICHEY*). Mr. Rector, the attorney. He's just like Mr. Carver, just like him.

ELLA RICHEY.

I have frequently heard Mr. Carver spoken of very highly, especially a few years ago, when he was a member of the School Board.

MRS. FERRY.

They say he was a very able member of the Board, and never hesitated to speak out for a rightful cause, and then—his kind heart. We found it out when my husband was hurt at the factory. There's no better man under the sun, and Mr. Rector—

ELLA RICHEY

(*blushing*). Have you known him long?

MRS. FERRY.

As a boy, and I knew his mother also, the widow of a Union officer. She passed away some years ago. Little Alfred was her only child, the idol of her heart, and he was such a good son. I see him yet, the little tow-head, mamma's boy I used to call him, because he was so devoted to her. Swept and scrubbed for her; wouldn't let her do anything when he was around, and always eager to do chores for the neighbors to earn something for mamma. And such a beautiful child; such handsome eyes,—even then I couldn't help admiring them.

ELLA RICHEY.

Did his father fall in battle?

MRS. FERRY.

He was wounded, and died soon after the close of the war, leaving his family in straitened circumstances, but the Carvers helped them. They took quite a fancy to the boy, and Mr. Carver even sent him to college and law-school at his own expense, but Mr. Rector paid back every cent with interest.

ELLA RICHEY.

Please let me have the address of Mrs. Jouby.

MRS. FERRY

(taking the newspaper from the desk, and looking up the address). 200 River Street.

ELLA RICHEY

(writing the address in a note-book). Much obliged, Mrs. Ferry. *(She steps to the counter.)*

MRS. CARVER

(*handing* MISS RICHEY *a package and change*). Here is your book and the change, Miss Richey.

ELLA RICHEY.

Thank you. (*Exit.*)

MRS. FERRY

(*as* MRS. CARVER *approaches her*).
Ferry went to the factory after supper, and then he's going to a political meeting; so I came to spend the evening with you.

MRS. CARVER.

That's right, Mrs. Ferry; make yourself at home.

Enter MEYER *and* BURKE.

BURKE

(*to* MRS. CARVER). Could we see Mr. Carver?

MEYER

(*to* MRS. CARVER). Shess, could vee see him?

BURKE

(*to* MEYER). What's the use of repatin'?

MRS. CARVER.

I expect my husband back any minute.

MEYER

(*to* MRS. CARVER). Boorke, he vas de coontriest man I ever seen, so coontry as a mool.

BURKE

(*to* MRS. CARVER). He forgits himself entoirely.

MRS. CARVER.

Please, gentlemen.

MEYER

(*to* MRS. CARVER). Dis partnership, it vas a hell on eart.

BURKE

(*to* MRS. CARVER). Bejabers, it's so.

MEYER

(*to* BURKE). Really?—Vhat a voonder shoo gif me right vonst. Dat I must shtrike on ret in de calendar.

BURKE

(*to* MEYER). Sure Oi gave in that you were roight only yisterday.

MEYER

(*to* BURKE). Shesderday?

BURKE

(*to* MEYER). Whin you confissed yourself to be a fool, and Oi said, you had struck the nail on the head all roight that toime.

MEYER

(*to* BURKE). Vhat, vhat, vhat's dat?
(*To* MRS. CARVER.) Vhat I sait, it vas

someting else, and dat vas dis; namely, dat I vas a fool—

BURKE

(*laughing, to* MRS. CARVER). You see.

MEYER

(*to* MRS. CARVER). Dat I vas a fool, because I vent into partnership mit such a Irishman.

BURKE

(*to* MRS. CARVER). Did you ivir hear the loike? (*Pointing to* MEYER.) A Dutchman from way-back.

MEYER

(*to* BURKE). I don't deny yet by a long shoot dat I vas born in Shermany, but I vas now a American citizen, (*To* MRS. CARVER.) and hasn't Mr. Carver some Sherman in him also?

BURKE

(*to* MEYER). Does his name sound Dutch?

MEYER

(*to BURKE*). I know dat he shpeaks
Sherman.

MRS. CARVER.

His mother was born in Germany.

Enter CARVER.

MRS. CARVER.

There he comes. (*To CARVER.*) These
gentlemen wish to see you.

CARVER

(*to MEYER and BURKE*). Good even-
ing, gentlemen. (*Giving his wife a rose.*)
Here, my dear.

MRS. CARVER

(*accepting the rose*). Thank you.

CARVER

(*to MEYER and BURKE*). What can
I do for you, gentlemen?

MEYER

(*to CARVER*). Vee comes to see shoo—

BURKE

(*to MEYER*). Let me spake; sure you won't git it straight.

MEYER

(*to BURKE*). So?

MRS. CARVER

(*to MRS. FERRY, as MEYER and BURKE glare at each other*). Let us go upstairs.

MRS. CARVER *and* MRS. FERRY *depart through the door to the right.*

CARVER.

Don't get excited, gentlemen. (*Placing two chairs a considerable distance apart.*) Be seated. (*Seating himself between them.*) Now, what is it?

BURKE.

We come because—

MEYER.

I shpoke de first, Mr. Carver.

BURKE

(*to MEYER*). Oi have the same roight to spake.

CARVER.

I'll get two straws; let him speak first, who draws the longer one.

BURKE.

All roight.

MEYER.

Go ahead.

CARVER

(*taking two straws from a broom standing near, and letting MEYER draw*). You drew the longer straw, Mr. Meyer; please proceed.

MEYER.

Me and Boorke, vee vant to go out of partnership in our bakery-biziness, and I vill tell shoo how it vas, and dat vas dis; namely, vee can't agree mit anonder how to divide. Vee wanted to go to de coort, but somebody sait dat vee better see shoo first. Boorke don't know vhat he wants. He's so coountry as a mool all de vwhile.

CARVER.

Is that all?

MEYER.

Shess, Mr. Carver.

CARVER

(to BURKE). What have you to say?

BURKE.

Sure, nothing much, except that ivery-thing is the other way.

CARVER.

There ought to be a way of settling your differences. Let us begin with the horses. How many have you?

BURKE.

Two, sir, a black and a bay.

CARVER

(getting two pieces of paper and giving one each to MEYER and BURKE). Jot down what you are willing to pay, compare prices, and let the highest bidder have the horses. If your bids are the same, then decide by drawing straws.

BURKE.

Bejabers, oi'm willing to troy it.

MEYER

(getting up and seating himself near BURKE). Come on, Boorke, let's see vonst vhat vee can do.

MEYER and BURKE begin to converse with each other in a subdued tone, writing and comparing, nodding to each other several times, and on one occasion drawing straws.

Enter RECTOR.

CARVER

(*shaking hands with RECTOR*). Hello, Rector!

RECTOR.

I was here a little while ago to say that a number of citizens of the Fourth Ward desire to nominate you to-night as the Independent candidate for the City Council.

CARVER.

I heard of it,—but what's the matter with you, why don't you run?

RECTOR.

Because I'm considering an offer to enter the law firm of Marshall, McNally & Rich-ter of New York.

CARVER

(pacing the floor in front of RECTOR, with hands folded behind his back, and looking down reflectively). Ye—es, ye—e—s.

RECTOR.

You are familiar with the deplorable state of affairs in our ward.

CARVER.

Yes, yes! Well, Rector, if the nomination is offered to me I will accept it, although I have a presentiment that, if elected, my position will not be an easy one.

RECTOR.

Your friends will be delighted, Mr. Carver, and there's another thing. As I was waiting for you, Mrs. Ferry came in with a copy of "The Daily Record," containing an article about a poor woman. *(Taking the paper from the desk and pointing to the article.)* Here it is.

CARVER

(*after reading the article*). What have you done?

RECTOR.

I ascertained that Mrs. Jouby conducts a boarding-house, and that her arrest was caused by a boarder, who claims that she took forty dollars from his trunk. I am convinced that the charge resulted from spite, because she resisted the scoundrel's approaches. Her husband, a quarry-man, is in the hospital, having been injured by a premature explosion.

CARVER.

Did you secure her release?

RECTOR.

On my representation the judge reduced the amount of her bond to one hundred dollars. Could you let me have the money?

CARVER

(going to the door to the right, opening it, and calling up). Where is the key to the safe, my dear?

MRS. CARVER

(from above). I'll be down in a minute.

CARVER.

I shall certainly be delighted to help the poor woman.

Enter MRS. CARVER, MRS. FERRY
and LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

CARVER

(to MRS. CARVER*)*. Please give Mr. Rector one hundred dollars. It is for the bond of Mrs. Jouby.

MRS. CARVER

(taking a key from her pocket, and going to the safe and opening it). Gladly. *(Taking out the money and giving it to* REC-TOR*)*. Is this enough?

RECTOR

(putting the money into his note-book).
Yes, Mrs. Carver, thank you. *(To CARVER as he departs.)* I may be a little late at the meeting.

CARVER.

All right, Rector.

Exit RECTOR. CARVER goes to MEYER and BURKE, who are still seated close to each other, and in earnest conversation.

BURKE *(as he and MEYER rise, to CARVER)*. Sure, we've agreed about the horses and several other things.

MEYER

(to CARVER). Vee are talking now of our shop, and vould like shoo to help us find out vhat it is vort to-morrow.

CARVER

(to MEYER). With pleasure.

MEYER

(*to CARVER*). And because de biziness is putty goot all de while, me and Boorke almost tink it vas best to shtay partners yet.

CARVER

(*to MEYER*). So much the better.

Enter FERRY.

FERRY

(*to CARVER*). I came to go to the meeting with you.

CARVER

(*to FERRY*). We still have a little time. Are you acquainted with Mr. Meyer and Mr. Burke?

FERRY

(*shaking hands with MEYER and BURKE*). Of course I am, of course I am.

CARVER

(*as several customers enter*). Excuse me, gentlemen.

MR. *and* MRS. CARVER *go behind the counter to the left, to wait on the customers, LITTLE JOHN CARVER endeavoring to assist. MRS. FERRY goes to a counter to the right, and turns over the pages of a book.*

BURKE.

What meeting did you refer to, Ferry?

FERRY.

We want to put up an Independent candidate against Dickson.

BURKE.

What have they agin Dickson?

FERRY.

His notorious record. He was elected to the City Council from the Second Ward once before, and soon became a high-flyer, spending money freely. After his term expired, he got down at the heel, but, six months ago, he removed to this ward, and opened up a real estate office.

MEYER.

When he comes in a saloon, he sets up de drinks for efferybody.

FERRY.

Yes, he treats by the wholesale, and through boodle secured not only the democratic nomination, but even the nomination of a weak man as his republican opponent.

MEYER.

It vas a shame.

Enter DICKSON. He makes a purchase, and then walks to a table in the center of the stage. Looking at a book here and there, he gradually approaches. FERRY, MEYER and BURKE, and endeavors to catch a part of their conversation, occasionally casting a vicious glance at CARVER.

FERRY.

Carver will probably be the Independent candidate.

MEYER.

Donnerwetter noch mal!

BURKE.

The divil you say.

DICKSON *now stands near FERRY, MEYER and BURKE. Although apparently absorbed in a book, he pays close attention to the conversation.*

MEYER.

Carver, he vas a tip-top school director; day called him de vatch-dog of de treasury.

BURKE

(*to MEYER*). He was in the School Board whin the Lincoln School was built, wasn't he?

MEYER

(*to BURKE*). Shess, and he bought the ground for it.

BURKE

(to MEYER). Oi ricollect there was some talk at the toime that Carver paid too much.

FERRY

(to BURKE). Bosh! Only four weeks later an adjoining lot brought five dollars per foot more. The false report came from Boggs, who is now president of the Board of Assessors. He had offered a lot at a much higher price, and because Carver prevented him from defrauding the School Board, Boggs has been his mortal enemy ever since.

BURKE

(to FERRY). Oi niver knew that Boggs was such a low-down feller.

MEYER notices DICKSON, and makes a sign to FERRY, whereupon the latter and BURKE turn towards DICKSON, who, for a second, bends over the book. Closing it he walks out of the store.

FERRY.

The sneak!

MEYER.

Dat mean look!

FERRY.

He's as mean as he looks. Did you hear how he treated Mrs. Plowman?

MEYER.

No; vhat vas de story?

FERRY.

Shortly after he started his real estate office, Dickson had Mrs. Plowman evicted for being behind with her rent. She was a poor, consumptive seamstress, and lived in one of Richey's tenement houses. When Carver heard of it he paid the rent, and had the furniture taken back into the house.

BURKE.

Bully boy!

MEYER.

His heart, it vas on de right shpot all de vhole.

FERRY.

Upon the death of Mrs. Plowman soon afterwards, the Carvers took her little daughter into their family.

CARVER

(*coming from behind the counter*). It's time to go to the meeting.

FERRY.

I'm ready.

BURKE.

Sure, Oi'll go along too.

MEYER.

So vill I.

CARVER.

The more the merrier.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

Papa, may I go?

MRS. CARVER

(*to CARVER*). He knows his lessons.

CARVER.

Come along, my boy. (*To MRS. CARVER.*) We won't be gone long.

MRS. CARVER.

All right, dear.

CARVER, FERRY, MEYER, BURKE
and LITTLE JOHN CARVER *depart, saluting the ladies and the latter responding.*

MRS. CARVER

(*coming from behind the counter*). Sit down.

MRS. FERRY

(*as both seat themselves near the desk*).
I didn't know that Mr. Carver was of German descent on his mother's side.

MRS. CARVER.

Her family came from Germany in 1833, and settled on a farm.

MRS. FERRY.

Ferry's mother also came over about that time, and I've often heard her talk of her early life in the County of Donegal; how she stood weeping on the deck of the ship that took her away, and looked back yearningly at the heath-clad hills of dear old Ireland, disappearing in the distance.

MRS. CARVER.

Yes, it must be a sad thing to leave one's native land.

MRS. FERRY.

Please tell me something more about your husband's mother.

MRS. CARVER.

She married John Carver, of Puritan stock, the owner of a neighboring farm.

MRS. FERRY.

And in what year was your husband born?

MRS. CARVER.

In 1848, and a year later his father fell a victim to the cholera. Then his mother rented the farm and returned with him to the home of her parents. (*Pointing to the portrait hanging over the desk.*) That is her picture.

MRS. FERRY

(*rising and looking at the portrait*). A lovable face.

MRS. CARVER

(*as MRS. FERRY resumes her seat*). A true index of her character. Let me relate an incident, showing how conscientious she was. A relative in Germany sent her some lace, enclosed in an envelope, and Mrs. Carver, having occasion shortly afterwards to go to the City with her son, then about eleven years of age, went with him to the Custom House and paid the duty on the lace.

MRS. FERRY.

No wonder her son became a good man.

MRS. CARVER.

He was barely twelve years old when she passed away, and shortly afterwards, his grandparents also having died in the meantime, he came to this city, and lived for a number of years with the family of his guardian, who invested in county bonds whatever property had been left to my husband. At the age of twenty-one Mr. Carver received the bonds, and also an accounting, which he found to be correct, except that the taxes had not been paid. And will you believe it, Mrs. Ferry, after selling the bonds for about five thousand dollars, the first thing he did was to pay the back-taxes.

MRS. FERRY.

Just like his mother.

MRS. CARVER.

And with the balance he purchased an interest in my father's book-store.

Enter ANNIE PLOWMAN through the door to the right.

ANNIE PLOWMAN.

Good night, auntie.

MRS. CARVER

(*kissing* ANNIE PLOWMAN). Good night, darling.

MRS. FERRY

(*kissing* ANNIE PLOWMAN). Good night, pet.

MRS. FERRY

(*as* ANNIE PLOWMAN *departs through the door to the right*). A sweet child. I presume nothing has yet been heard of her father.

MRS. CARVER.

Nothing since he left two years ago for Leadville, Colorado, to work in the silver mines. (*Sadly*) Like many others out there, he may have reaped disappointment.

MRS. FERRY

(*as* MRS. CARVER *wipes a tear away*). Why so sad, Mrs. Carver?

MRS. CARVER.

Eight years ago my brother James organized a mining company to develop claims near Butte, Montana, and father took most of the stock.

MRS. FERRY.

Didn't they find mineral?

MRS. CARVER.

They made several strikes, but it only created false hopes, inducing the stockholders to make additional outlays. Father lost everything, and my husband advanced almost all the money which he had saved, so that father's debts could be paid.

MRS. FERRY.

Is your brother still in Montana?

MRS. CARVER.

Yes, Mrs. Ferry, and twice my husband has sent money to enable him to come home, but it was returned. He works as a com-

mon miner, still spending the greater part of his earnings and spare time on those claims. (*Sadly*) The poor boy.

MRS. FERRY.

Your brother may yet have luck, Mrs. Carver.

Enter LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

Mamma, papa is nominated. A whole lot of people were there, and when Mr. Rector spoke papa's name in his speech, you should have heard the cheering. After the chairman said that papa had been nominated, he had to make a speech, and as soon as he was through, a crowd got around papa, shaking hands with him, and cheering, and for all I know, they may be cheering yet. And now I'll have to tell Annie about it too. (*Exit through the door to the right.*)

Enter CARVER, RECTOR, FERRY and MEYER.

CARVER

(*as* MRS. CARVER *and* MRS. FERRY *rise*). Here we are again.

MRS. CARVER.

Johnny told us of your nomination. (*Going with her husband some distance to the left, while the others converse in subdued tones.*) John,—I'm afraid—the way Dickson looked at you. (*Wiping away a tear.*) I can't help it;—I beg you to be careful.

CARVER

(*soothingly*). There's no reason for your anxiety, my dear.

Enter BURKE.

BURKE

(*shaking hands with* CARVER). Oi couldn't pass by without congratulatin' you.

CARVER.

Thank you, Mr. Burke. (*To all present.*) Sit down.

All seat themselves around CARVER at the front of the stage.

RECTOR.

The enthusiasm at to-night's meeting was very encouraging.

Enter CAPT. KETCHUM. He steps to the counter to the left, and CARVER gets up to wait on him.

BURKE.

Oi'm willing to bet me bottom dollar that Mr. Carver will win in a walk.

FERRY.

I hope so.

MEYER.

Mr. Carver, he mate a fine speech dis evening. He must have been to a goot shkool.

FERRY

(*to MEYER*). He went to one of the public schools in this city.

CARVER

(from behind the counter to the left).
Yes, Ferry, and I remember that in the beginning I had considerable trouble.

MEYER

(to CARVER). And vhat vas de trooble?

CARVER

(to MEYER). To get over the habit of thinking in German while speaking English.

MEYER

(to CARVER). And how did dat come?

CARVER

(to MEYER). My early instruction at home, in the country, had been almost entirely in German.

MEYER

(to CARVER). I always tought dat English, it vas de easiest language of all.

BURKE

(*to MEYER*). Sure, Meyer, for fellers loike you, who manufacture their own English.

MEYER.

Shoost look at him.

CARVER *steps from behind the counter and* CAPT. KETCHUM *turns and listens to the conversation.*

CARVER

(*returning and resuming his seat, to MEYER*). No, Mr. Meyer, it is not easy to speak and write good English.

MEYER

(*to CARVER*). But don't shoo believe, Mr. Carver, dat our shildren ought to learn Sherman too, dat is, if day have a shance?

CARVER

(*to MEYER*). Most assuredly, Mr. Meyer; but it should never be at the expense of English.

MEYER

(*to CARVER*). Vell, vell, it vas vonst so all de vhile as it vas, and dat vas dis; namely, dat vee neffer get too old for it, to find out dat vee can learn someting new yet.

Exit CAPT. KETCHUM.

BURKE.

Unless we're (*With a side-look at MEYER.*) loike some fellers, preferrin' to be after remainin' stupid in spoight of their ignorance.

MEYER

(*rising and endeavoring to keep calm, to BURKE*). And in shpite of all vhat shoo say dare, I vont do shoo de favor to get mad. (*Angrily*) Donnerwetter! (*Endeavoring to keep calm.*) No I vont get mad; vhat shoo sait, it vas too foolish.

BURKE

(*rising, to MEYER*). And, bejabers, Oi won't git mad at inything a feller loike you moight be after sayin'. (*Angrily*) Sich a—

CARVER

(rising and touching BURKE'S arm).
Please let the incident be closed.

CARVER, MEYER *and* BURKE *resume their seats, the latter shaking his head at MEYER.*

MEYER

(to CARVER). And how long dit you go to de pooblic shkool?

CARVER

(to MEYER). About three years. My guardian then placed me in a dry goods store, Mr. Arnold, one of my teachers, however, continuing to give me private lessons twice a week for two years longer. From English translations he taught me Greek literature, and through him I came in contact with the exalted sentiments of Socrates, which taught me, that it is mainly love of justice, that awakens and cultivates in man all those noble traits, making him worthy of the name of man; that its presence con-

tinually lifts up the soul towards true greatness, as its absence drags the soul down to smallness, meanness and baseness.

MEYER

(*to CARVER*). And so Mr. Arnold, he vas de man trough whom shoo learned dose tings, shoo say?

CARVER

(*to MEYER*). Yes, Mr. Meyer.

MRS. CARVER

(*to CARVER*). And you know it was also through Mr. Arnold tnat you met father, and obtained a position in his bookstore.

CARVER

(*with a smile, to his wife*). And it goes without saying that I have never regretted it.

BURKE

(*rising and shaking hands with CARVER, the others rising also*). Good night,

Mr. Carver. (*Placing his hand on CARVER'S shoulder.*) The first toime Oi iver saw you was whin you stopped a pair of run-away horses hitched to Mr. Richey's carriage, containing his wife and little choild.

RECTOR

(*to BURKE*). Mr. Richey, the president of the Standard Gas Light Company?

BURKE

(*to RECTOR*). Yes, sir.

MRS. CARVER

(*to RECTOR*). The child was the young lady who was in the store this evening.

RECTOR.

Indeed?

CARVER.

It's not worth talking about.

BURKE.

I remimber the horses were runnin' madly, and you were dragged half a block before you could stop them.

MRS. CARVER

(*to* CARVER). I was a school-girl when it happened, and, for a long time afterwards, the heroes of my novels assumed your features.

CARVER.

But, my dear—

MRS. FERRY

(*to* MRS. CARVER). Don't it still happen?

MRS. CARVER

(*with a smile to* MRS. FERRY). Mrs. Ferry—

MEYER

(*laughing*). Ha, ha, ha! After folks vas married so long!

BURKE

(*to* MEYER). Don't be after judgin' others by your own experience.

MEYER

(*angrily*). Shoost look at him. Vat he talks togette dare, it goes into de ash-gray.

(*Calming down.*) No, I sait vonst dat I von't get mad, and I von't neider. (*To BURKE.*) But vhat for must shoo kick all de vwhile when I make a little fun vonst. Shoo know right vell vhat I mean in earnest, and if shoo don't, den I vill tell shoo vhat it vas, and dat vas dis; namely, when I go away, and come home, I gif my Gret'l a kiss all de vwhile, and if a man vas not so goot to his vife when she has many wrinkles in her face, as when she has none yet, den such a man, he should shame himself someting till vay down into his boots. So,—(*Raising his voice.*) dat vas vhat my real meaning vas, if shoo vant to know it, and dat vas vhat I say, —I,—Meyer.

(*The curtain drops.*)

ACT II.

SCENE I—Library in Richey's house. A door to the right opens into a hall, and a door to the left into an adjoining room.

A book-case stands against the rear wall, and another against the left wall to the front. A table stands in the center towards the front, a sofa to the right of it, and a desk to the left of it. There is a telephone to the right, towards the front. A number of chairs are placed in different parts of the room.

TIME—The forenoon of the following day.

RICHEY sits at the desk writing.

Enter MAGGIE presenting a card.

RICHEY.

All right, tell him to come in.

Exit MAGGIE.

RICHEY

(*to himself*). He's early; he must have some important news.

Enter MEACHAM.

MEACHAM.

Good morning, Mr. Richey. (*Seating himself near the desk.*) They had a meeting in the Fourth Ward last night, and nominated Carver as the Independent candidate.

RICHEY.

The devil you say.

MEACHAM

(*laughing*). It's a good thing we fixed the principal papers. They say nothing, but "The Daily Record" has a big notice.

RICHEY.

Have you got it with you?

MEACHAM

(*handing* RICHEY *a newspaper*). Yes, sir.

RICHEY

(*reading*). “Rally of the Independents of the Fourth Ward. John Carver is their candidate for the City Council. His Ringing Address.” (*Reading a few words in a mumbling voice.*) Disgusting! (*Reading aloud.*) “A member of the City Council should be honest.” (*Reading again a few words in a mumbling voice.*) Pshaw!—(*Reading aloud.*) “Every intelligent man is able to discriminate between good and bad municipal measures, if he really wants to. Weighty questions will come before the next City Council in connection with the expiration of the City lighting contract on January 1st. In deciding them, due cognizance should be taken of the fact that the cost of production of gas and electricity has decreased materially.” (*To MEACHAM.*) The damn fool! (*After looking down reflectively for a moment.*) You’d better fix “The Daily Record” also.

MEACHAM.

Its circulation is too small to harm us.

RICHEY

(*reading aloud*). "If elected I will not endeavor to gain favors at the expense of honor and self-respect." (*To MEACHAM.*) Let Dickson promise all the more in his campaign speeches. You write them for him, don't you?

MEACHAM.

Of course, I do; for although Dickson is able enough, and gives me some good points, I'd be afraid to let him write a speech. He might overreach himself, and make a mess of it.

RICHEY.

Has Carver any debts?

MEACHAM.

Fox has a four thousand dollar mortgage on his house.

RICHEY.

When will it be due?

MEACHAM.

On September fifteenth.

RICHEY

(going to the telephone). We must get hold of it. *(Telephoning)* "The People's Street Railway Company."—

Tell Mr. Wiley to come to Mr. Richey's house. *(Resuming his seat.)* Carver's an infernal nuisance.

MEACHAM.

Our expenses in the Fourth Ward will increase.

RICHEY.

It doesn't matter as long as we beat Carver. We must beat him. By the way, do you need money?

MEACHAM.

About a thousand dollars to water the voting cattle in some of the wards.

RICHEY

(*going to the telephone*). It won't do to let them get dry. (*Telephoning*) The Standard Gas Light Company.—I want to speak to Dodd, the treasurer.—Hello, Dodd! This is Mr. Richey. Get a thousand dollars from the bank. (*To MEACHAM.*) How do you want it?

MEACHAM.

In small bills.

RICHEY

(*telephoning*). In small bills, Dodd.

RICHEY

(*resuming his seat*). Call for the money at my office at twelve o'clock.

MEACHAM.

Very well, sir.

RICHEY.

Can we drum up any charges against Carver?

MEACHAM.

Maybe through Mullally, the district assessor for the Fourth Ward. At the last election Carver helped to defeat him for the legislature, and he'll jump at a chance to get even.

RICHEY.

Naturally.

MEACHAM.

And our friend Boggs, the president of the Board of Assessors, is also an enemy of Carver.

RICHEY.

What's the trouble?

MEACHAM.

Carver interfered with Boggs, when he tried to get the best of the School Board in a real estate deal, notwithstanding the fact that Boggs offered the old fool a slice of the profits.

RICHEY.

I'm glad to hear this.

MEACHAM.

And now I'll have somebody write a letter to "The Democratic Headlight" and "The Morning Republican", accusing Carver of fraud in his tax-returns, and then Boggs can delegate Mullally to investigate.

RICHEY.

I'm afraid that the tax-returns are correct.

MEACHAM.

Very likely they are; but that cuts no figure.

RICHEY.

The plan seems feasible.

MEACHAM

(*rising*). I'll begin at once. (*Departing*) Good day, Mr. Richey.

RICHEY.

Good day.

Exit MEACHAM *through the door to the right.*

RICHEY

(reflectively). Everything was so well arranged. Curse Carver.

Enter WILEY.

WILEY

(shaking hands with RICHEY and seating himself). What is it, old man?

RICHEY.

Carver is the Independent candidate for alderman in the Fourth Ward.

WILEY.

I heard of it.

RICHEY.

Fox holds a four thousand dollar mortgage on his house, due on September fifteenth. You must buy the mortgage.

WILEY

(going to the telephone). I'll telephone immediately. *(Telephoning)* City Bank.—Is Mr. Fox there?—Yes.—Hello, Fox; this

is Wiley. What interest do you pay on deposits?—Yes, on time deposits.—Only three per cent? That's very little.—Say, Fox, it's for Mrs. Wiley. I gave her four thousand dollars, and now she wants me to invest it for her.—Oh I guess a note or a mortgage.—You say you have a mortgage for four thousand dollars at six per cent?—When is it due?—On September fifteenth?—On what property?—On Carver's house? Who is Carver?—Oh, Carver the book-man.—Yes, I know the property. I'll take the mortgage, and pay the interest up to date.—All right, Fox, I'll be there in an hour.

RICHEY

(*as WILEY resumes his seat*). I'm certain that we'll get twenty Indians into the next City Council. After they're elected, they'll be dirt cheap too, you know. We'll own them body and soul. Their votes for our gas-contract won't cost over five hundred dollars apiece.

WILEY.

Twenty out of thirty is a good working majority, and will secure the renewal of our gas-contract with the City.

RICHEY

(rubbing his hands gleefully). And of our yearly profit of three hundred thousand dollars,—net—from the city.

WILEY.

For ten years longer,—in addition to our profits from private consumers.

RICHEY

(continuing to rub his hands). Gratifying,—very gratifying, indeed. But there will be lively kicking on the part of the citizens.

WILEY.

Damn the citizens.

RICHEY.

We have nothing to fear because both candidates for the mayoralty are on our side.

WILEY.

Yes, no matter how the election goes, we're absolutely certain of the unqualified support of the next City Administration. By the way, how much have we expended so far?

RICHEY

(taking a paper from a drawer and handing it to WILEY). This is a complete list of our expenditures up to date.

WILEY

(reading aloud). "Paid by Wiley for The Standard Gas Light Company to the Democratic City Central Committee, \$4000. Paid by Richey for the Standard Gas Light Company to the Republican City Central Committee, \$4000."

RICHEY.

You know that was the money for the campaign funds.

WILEY

(reading aloud). "Paid out by Meacham for work done at the Democratic Convention \$5500. Paid out by Smiley for work done at the Republican Convention \$5000."

RICHEY.

Yes, that's what it cost us to have suitable mayoralty candidates put up.

WILEY

(reading aloud). "'The Morning Republican' \$5000; 'The Democratic Headlight' \$5000; 'The Independent' \$3000; 'The Argus' \$2000; the Committee on Lighting \$6000."

RICHEY.

That, you know, is the committee of the City Council, appointed a year ago to investigate the relative merits of gas and electric lighting. The six thousand dollars worked like a charm; the committee never got ready to file a report. *(Laughing)* New details,

that had to be looked into, were continually coming up.

WILEY.

Who's the chairman?

RICHEY.

Tipps of the Second Ward, and we must see that he and the other members of the Lighting Committee are re-elected and re-appointed, so that there will be no difficulty in having its report deferred until the end of September. Then they may submit anything, and even advise that the call for the lighting bids be taken in hand. There will be no fear of competition, because nobody can put up a lighting plant in three months.

WILEY.

Certainly not. (*Continuing to read aloud.*) "Meacham \$5000; Smiley \$5000."

RICHEY.

You know Meacham, the Democratic boss, has to work the Democratic end of the

election racket, and Smiley, the Republican boss, the Republican end.

WILEY.

And if the Democrats carry the City Council again—

RICHEY.

Then, of course, we'll retain Meacham as our chief-rascal, but if the Republicans win, we'll have to look to Smiley to engineer our gas-contract through the City Council. However, we made the agreement with both, that they shall each get another five thousand dollars after the renewal of the contract.

WILEY.

That's right, Richey; I heartily approve of it.

RICHEY.

If our terms with the two rascals were not exactly the same, it might give rise to personal rancor between them, and lead to unforeseen difficulties.

WILEY

(*looking at the paper*). Yes, yes, that's so. (*Reading aloud.*) "Paid by Meacham to Todley, the Democratic candidate for the City Council in the First Ward, \$500; to each of the two Democratic Central Committeemen, \$250, \$500. Paid by Smiley to Tipps, the Republican candidate for the City Council in the Second Ward, \$1000; to each of the two Republican Central Committeemen \$400, \$800."—(*After reading on in silence for a moment.*) In the Fourth Ward the expenses amount to thirty-five hundred dollars. (*Whistling in astonishment.*) That's too much.

RICHEY.

See how it's itemized.

WILEY

(*reading aloud*). "Paid out by Meacham. Dickson's salary for six months at \$150 per month, \$900; Dickson's expenses for six months at \$100 per month, \$600; Dickson,

for extra election outlays, \$1000; each of the two Democratic Central Committeemen \$250, \$500. Paid out by Smiley. Each of the two Republican Central Committeemen \$250, \$500." (To RICHEY.) Was it necessary to buy up the Republican committeemen of the Fourth Ward also?

RICHEY.

Yes, Wiley; that money was given to them for exerting their influence in getting the Republicans of the ward to nominate a weak candidate in opposition to Dickson. The two committeemen did nobly.

WILEY

(*sarcastically*). And you people did nobly also in scattering money right and left in the Fourth Ward.

RICHEY.

But it was well spent because we need Dickson. He is the biggest rascal in town. His real name is Devlin, and he served two years in Sing Sing.

WILEY.

And must get into the City Council by hook or crook. (*Looking at the paper.*) Fortunately in the other wards the expenses are less,—the entire total is forty thousand dollars. (*Returning the paper to RICHEY and rising.*) It is no more than right that my street-railway company should stand a part of these expenses, because it will also be benefited by them, and be able to obtain franchises for a number of new branch lines.

RICHEY.

Yes, Wiley, I thought you would look at it that way.

WILEY.

We'll refund a third of the outlay under all circumstances, and I hope that our political arrangements will run smoothly.

RICHEY

(*rising*). Most assuredly they will. As I told you before, we're sure of getting

twenty Indians into the City Council. Of course, some of the Central Committeemen are obstreperous, and a number of Independent candidates are in the field. (*Reflectively*) Carver is the most dangerous one, but luckily we've fixed things so that his defeat is assured.

WILEY

(*laughing*). Yes, money makes the mare go. (*Departing through the door to the right.*) Ta, ta, old man.

RICHEY.

So long, Wiley.

RICHEY *closes the desk, and is about to leave the room.*

Enter ELLA RICHEY *through the door to the left.*

ELLA RICHEY.

I'm so glad to find you here, papa. I've got a favor to ask.

RICHEY.

Be quick about it.

ELLA RICHEY.

A poor quarry-man named Jouby was hurt some time ago.

RICHEY.

Very interesting news.

ELLA RICHEY.

He will soon be well enough to do light work. Please give him some position—at the gas-works.

RICHEY.

Make the gas-works an asylum for invalids?

ELLA RICHEY.

His family,—they are so poor.

RICHEY.

The rule is that our superintendent engages the workmen.

ELLA RICHEY.

Every rule has an exception ; please, papa, for my sake. Think of mother and the many hearts she made happy.

RICHEY

(*gruffly*). Don't get sentimental.
(*Softly*) I'll talk to the superintendent;
(*Gruffly*) but don't take this as a criterion for the future.

ELLA RICHEY

(*kissing her father*). Oh, papa ! Thank you ever so much.

RICHEY.

Tut, tut,—that'll do. (*Departing*) Both-
eration ! (*Exit through the door to the right.*)

ELLA RICHEY.

How glad I am, and I'm sure, Mr. Rector will be pleased too.

Enter MARY RICHEY through the door to the left.

MARY RICHEY.

What was the matter, Ella? Was your father scolding?

ELLA RICHEY.

No, auntie; he was as nice as could be, and promised to give employment to Mrs. Jouby's husband.

MARY RICHEY.

The poor woman you told me about?

ELLA RICHEY.

Yes, auntie; I called on her this morning, and a few minutes after my arrival Mr. Rector came, and informed Mrs. Jouby that her case had been dismissed. Tears came into her eyes, and she was hardly able to thank Mr. Rector.

MARY RICHEY.

I can well imagine that.

ELLA RICHEY.

And then Mr. Rector escorted me home, and I invited him to call. (*Blushing*) It was no more than right, (*Confusedly*) to,—yes, you know, to reciprocate his courtesy.

MARY RICHEY

(*anxiously*). He's a stranger.

ELLA RICHEY.

But a true gentleman; and so considerate. Why, auntie, he even brought toys for the children. He was so nice,—the way he spoke to them all,—it was awfully sweet,—I could have kissed—

MARY RICHEY

(*in astonishment*). What?

ELLA RICHEY

(*confusedly*). The children, I mean the children.

(*The curtain drops.*)

SCENE II—*A hall with a platform to the right, and rows of chairs to the left. The entrance to the hall is at the rear of the stage.*

TIME—*In the evening, a week later.*

A meeting is in progress. WILEY, MEACHAM, DICKSON, and two other citizens, occupy the platform, WILEY presiding. People continue to come in, some seating themselves and others standing about.

DICKSON

(reading from a manuscript). “Having pointed out that every candidate on our ticket is worthy of your support, I will now make a few remarks bearing on the aldermanic election in our own ward.”

Amidst cheers and accompanied by a crowd the Dickson Guards enter. They are preceded by a drummer and a fifer, and led by CAPTAIN KETCHUM. They carry torches and two transparencies with the inscriptions “Dickson Guards” and “Dickson

and Reform" respectively. After parading through the hall they line up before the platform.

CAPTAIN KETCHUM

(*after the music ceases*). Three cheers for Dickson! Hip, hip!—

THE CROWD

(*responding*). Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!

WILEY.

I herewith thank the Dickson Guards for honoring us with their presence, and propose that we give them three rousing cheers. Three cheers for the Dickson Guards! Hip, hip!—

THE CROWD

(*responding*). Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!

WILEY.

Please come to order now, gentlemen, Mr. Dickson has something important to tell you.

DICKSON

(continuing to read from the manuscript). “More honor would redound to me, if I had a more honorable opponent than Carver, the tax-dodger.” *(Cheers)*

A VOICE FROM THE CROWD.

No such thing,—Carver ain’t a tax-dodger.

MEACHAM

(rising). If our friend read the newspapers he would know that they have thoroughly ventilated this matter.

Laughter and cheers as Meacham resumes his seat.

DICKSON

(continuing to read from the manuscript). “Carver is not an ordinary tax-dodger, he is a wholesale one; for, according to the reports submitted by Mullally, the district-assessor of the Fourth Ward, to Mr. Boggs, the President of the Board of Assess-

ors, the value of Carver's furniture is four hundred and fifty dollars, or three times the amount put down in his own perjured statement, and I venture to state that he will not escape condemnation before the bar of public opinion." (*Cheers*) "You will also recollect, my fellow citizens, that through Carver's intrigues the School Board paid a double price for the lot on which the Lincoln School stands."

A VOICE FROM THE CROWD.

It ain't so. Carver's reputation is above reproach.

MEACHAM

(*rising*). Let me tell my unsophisticated friends, that often the man with the reputation of a saint has the character of a devil, and a tendency to fish in the dark.

Cheers and laughter as MEACHAM sits down.

DICKSON

(*continuing to read from the manuscript*). "I leave it to your judgment, my

fellow-citizens, whether Carver went into this swindle with any other motive than to participate in the plunder." (*Cheers*) "Carver was even a Jonah to his own father-in-law, for through Carver the old gentleman was reduced from affluence to poverty. Grief and distress brought him into a premature grave."

A VOICE FROM THE CROWD.

The old man's money was sunk in mines.

MEACHAM

(*rising*). Carver lost it in mining speculations, did he?

A VOICE FROM THE CROWD.

Carver had nothing to do with it.

MEACHAM

(*angrily*). That man has been bought.

SEVERAL VOICES FROM THE CROWD.

Put him out! Put him out!

MEACHAM.

I give the disturber fair warning not to interrupt us again. Carver's doom is sealed, no matter what his henchmen may say or do. A man, who robs his own father-in-law, is not worthy of public trust. (*Cheers as MEACHAM sits down.*)

DICKSON

(*continuing to read from the manuscript*). "In spite of the fact that money came to Carver from various crooked channels, he didn't have the ability to retain it. Carver's signal failure as a business man is emphasized by the fact that his property is mortgaged to the utmost limit. He is, in fact, a bankrupt. Now, my fellow citizens, do you want a man who is not able to take care of his own affairs, to administer yours? Without unduly flattering myself, I can say, that, in a comparatively short time, I have built up a large business right here amongst you, and that my intimate connections with the most prominent business men of the city cannot fail to inure to your interest. You

are aware that I am no novice, but was honored with an election to the City Council once before. My record is open and I stand upon it." (*Cheers*) "There is another matter, which will especially interest my German friends, and it is that Carver is down on the Germans, and has often been heard to remark that the teaching of the German language in this country is superfluous and even detrimental."

CAPT. KETCHUM.

Yes, sir; it's true. I heard Carver say so myself.

MEACHAM

(*rising*). There, my fellow-citizens, you see for yourselves that the last statement of Mr. Dickson is just as reliable as all of the other statements which he has made, and that it is fully corroborated by the testimony of one of the most reputable citizens of the Fourth Ward, Capt. Ketchum of the Dickson Guards, an organization whose members are actuated by honorable and

patriotic motives, and who, under the able leadership of their gallant captain, will march to victory on the day of the election.

A VOICE FROM THE CROWD.

Three cheers for the Dickson Guards.
Hip, hip!—

THE CROWD

(responding). Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!

CAPT. KETCHUM.

Three cheers for Mr. Dickson. Hip,
hip!—

THE CROWD

(responding, as DICKSON bows). Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!

MEACHAM.

Please come to order now, fellow-citizens, and let Mr. Dickson proceed with his interesting discourse. (*He sits down.*)

DICKSON

(*continuing to read from the manuscript*). “It is needless for me to state that I am a staunch friend of the Germans. In fact I would give everything I have for the ability to read the works of the great Schiller and the brilliant Goethe in the original.” (*Cheers*) “I also desire to tell you, my fellow-citizens, that I have maintained a dignified silence in regard to some of the threadbare lies trumped up against me, knowing that malediction is the fate of every honest man. But when Carver over-steps all bounds of decency, when he out-lies the liar, it becomes my duty to defend myself, and to show him up in his true light, as a most contemptible man, wallowing in the cesspool of vile vituperation. Like the cuttle-fish he darkens the water with his lying charges in order to conceal his own iniquities. Like a cowardly assassin he endeavors to stab me from behind a woman; not a living woman, oh, no,—he stabs me from behind the shroud of a woman mouldering in her grave.

A VOICE FROM THE CROWD.

It's a lie!

MEACHAM

(rising). What do you get for disturbing the meeting?

SEVERAL VOICES FROM THE CROWD.

Put him out! Put him out!

MEACHAM

(as a tumult arises and a man is evicted). Don't be too hard on him. *(After the tumult has somewhat subsided.)* It's time for Carver's hirelings to find out that there is no room for them here. Nobody need tell us that Carver don't do the dirty work himself; of course not, he's too cowardly for that.—He instigates others to do it for him.

DICKSON

(continuing to read from the manuscript as MEACHAM resumes his seat). "I refer to the story connecting me with the

eviction of Mrs. Plowman. As the agent of Mr. Richey, her landlord, it was my duty to inform him that she was behind with her rent, and I pledge my word of honor that through the mistake of a clerk she was evicted without my being notified. As soon as I heard of it I rushed to Mrs. Plowman's assistance, but Carver had already preceded me. It is cheap to gain popularity by posing as a benefactor. Moreover, Mrs. Plowman was an attractive woman, and statements come from reliable sources that Carver put her under obligation to him in order to get her into his power. What else can be expected of a man, who abuses the members of his own family? Poor Mrs. Carver has to toil in the book-store from morning until night, and even upon his little boy he heaps work beyond his tender years. It is burlesque to hear some people talk of Carver's charity; calling him the personification of lechery and meanness would be more correct." (*Cheers*) "He has the audacity to tell his friends to put in their best licks to have him elected, and not to ask for fa-

vors in return, because he stands on too high a level. But I say, my fellow-citizens, that a level above one of plain gratitude is the level of a hog, and a decent man should be ashamed of it. I rejoice that I am made of different stuff. I shall always stand by my friends, and be ready to exert my political influence in their behalf."

*Amidst cheers DICKSON sits down.
Music by the fife and drum band.*

WILEY

(after the music ceases). Fellow-citizens, I trust that the more carefully you weigh what Mr. Dickson has told you, the more you will deem it your duty not only to vote for him yourselves, but to get every one of your friends to vote for him also. Mr. Dickson is no tax-dodger, and will work for the best interests of the city. *(Cheers. DICKSON speaks a few words to WILEY in a subdued tone.)* Fellow-citizens; it affords me great pleasure to announce that Mr. Dickson tenders a cordial invitation to all present to

remain and accept his hospitality. In adjourning the meeting, I propose three hearty cheers for our next alderman. Three cheers for Dickson. Hip, hip!—

THE CROWD

(*responding*). Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!

Amidst cheering and music beer kegs are rolled into the hall, and two trestles placed to the left of the stage, boards being laid across them, and the crowd thronging around the improvised counter; DICKSON accompanies WILEY and MEACHAM to the door, and after he shakes hands with them they depart. He then returns to the counter, where the crowd has already commenced drinking.

Enter FERRY, BURKE, and MEYER, with a number of citizens, including the man who was evicted from the meeting. They do not mingle with the DICKSON crowd, but take positions towards the front of the stage to the right.

MEYER.

Shoost look at dem.

FERRY.

Disgraceful!

BURKE

(to the man, who was evicted). Beja-
bers, what was the use in waitin' till they
kicked you out? Sure, you missed it in not
tillin' us sooner, so we could have been here
in toime to cram the lies down their throats.
And, begorrah, it ain't too late to be after
doin' it yit. *(Looking around.)* Where's
Rector? Didn't he come along? *(To the
man who was evicted.)* Go to his house and
git him, and jist hurry up and be quick
about it.

Exit in haste the man who was evicted.

MEYER

(to FERRY). Vat day sait, it von't
amount to much no-how.

FERRY

(*to MEYER*). Lies often repeated, are apt to mislead.

BURKE

(*with clenched fists*). It would do me good to break the faces of some of the infernal scoundrels.

A VOICE FROM THE DICKSON CROWD.

Hurrah for Dickson. Hip, hip!—

THE DICKSON CROWD

(*responding as DICKSON doffs his hat*). Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!

DICKSON.

Take another one, boys.

THE DICKSON CROWD

(*touching glasses with DICKSON*). Here's luck, here's luck! (*They drink.*)

DICKSON.

Fill 'em up again.

CAPT KETCHUM

(touching DICKSON on the arm and walking with him to the front of the stage to the left, while the DICKSON crowd continues drinking). Excuse me, Mr. Dickson, you know I'm the captain of the Dickson Guards, and it was me who told you that Carver was running down the Dutch.

DICKSON

(shaking hands with CAPT. KETCHUM). I'm glad to see you here, Captain. What is it?

CAPTAIN KETCHUM.

Between us,—the boys are beginning to grumble.

DICKSON.

What's the matter, Captain?

CAPT. KETCHUM

(making a significant motion with his forefinger and thumb). That, Mr. Dickson, —that's what's the matter.

DICKSON.

But, my dear Captain, let me tell you—

CAPT. KETCHUM.

Never mind, Mr. Dickson, that's all right; just let me have the spondulix, and a little more than the last time, if you please. The boys are getting ugly, and it won't pay to be stingy you know.

DICKSON

(giving CAPT. KETCHUM a roll of bills). Here, Captain.

CAPT. KETCHUM.

You're a gentleman, Mr. Dickson; yes sir, and I have always taken you for one.

CAPT. KETCHUM *returns to the bar,*
followed by DICKSON.

SKINNER

(*intercepting* DICKSON). Could you
let me have a couple of dollars to set 'em up
for the boys in my neighborhood?

DICKSON

(*giving* SKINNER *money*). To be sure,
Mr.—

SKINNER

(*to* DICKSON). My name is Skinner.

DICKSON

(*to* SKINNER). Happy to meet you,
Mr. Skinner.

SKINNER

(*to* DICKSON). You'll get a bumper
majority, Mr. Dickson. (*He returns to the
bar.*)

DICKSON

(*noticing the CARVER crowd, and approaching them*). Glad to see you, gentlemen. How do you do, how do you do? Come to the bar.

FERRY.

We don't want anything; we only came to look on.

DICKSON

(*going to the bar*). Come on, gentlemen; come on.

MEYER

(*to BURKE*). Not a drop.

BURKE

(*to MEYER*). Sure, Oi niver thought you could stand to see so much beer runnin' down the wrong throats.

MEYER.

Shoost look at him.

DICKSON

Returns with two henchmen, all three carrying glasses of beer, which they force into the hands of FERRY, MEYER, BURKE, and others of the FERRY crowd, DICKSON retaining a glass for himself.

DICKSON.

Take 'em, take 'em! Go to the bar. Help yourselves.

FERRY

(as he and his friends hold the glasses without drinking, to DICKSON). We only came to look on.

DICKSON

(to FERRY). You surely won't refuse to take a drink with me. *(Endeavoring to touch FERRY'S glass.)* Your health, my friend! *(As FERRY withdraws his glass.)* What's the matter?

FERRY

(angrily). The devil is your friend, not I.

Enter RECTOR, *joining the* CARVER crowd.

The dispute has attracted a number of persons from the bar; they remain standing at a little distance from the CARVER crowd.

DICKSON

(shaking his fist at FERRY). What do you mean?

FERRY.

That we don't sell our votes for beer.

FERRY

throws his glass at DICKSON'S feet, *his friends following his example. For a moment* DICKSON *is speechless with anger and astonishment.*

DICKSON

(scrutinizing FERRY *more closely).*
Now I know who you are. I saw you at Carver's store a week ago.

VOICES FROM THE DICKSON CROWD.

Kick 'em out, kick 'em out!

RECTOR.

That gentleman is right. (*Pointing to the bar, where drinking is still going on.*) There lies the root of the evil. (*To the DICKSON crowd.*) That's the way unscrupulous men begin to steal your rights and undermine your liberty.

DICKSON

(*sneeringly, to RECTOR*). Ah, ha! I see Carver's right bower had to come also.

RECTOR.

I don't deny that I am Carver's friend; I glory in his friendship.

DICKSON.

In the friendship of a tax-dodger?

BURKE

(*attempting to strike DICKSON*). Oi'll smash your nose, you lyin' spalpeen. Take that!

VOICES FROM THE DICKSON CROWD

(*as DICKSON dodges the blow and several of his henchmen make a rush towards FERRY and his friends*). Kick 'em out, kick 'em out:

By this time the entire DICKSON crowd have approached, the greater part, however, standing about and looking on passively.

FERRY.

Stand together, boys.

BURKE

(*as the CARVER crowd force their opponents back to the left of the stage*). The cowards! Fellers, who sell thimsilves for beer, have lost their manhood.

MEYER

(*with uplifted fists*). Sherman fists are vort someting too yet!

RECTOR

(*mounting a chair as the fighters disappear to the left of the stage, where, unseen by the audience, they keep up a noisy tumult*). Enough, my friends, enough. Don't resort to unnecessary violence. Let us go.

SEVERAL VOICES FROM THE CAR-
VER CROWD

(*as FERRY, BURKE, MEYER, and other friends of CARVER who participated in the fight, reappear from the left, breathless and panting, BURKE swinging a torn-off coat tail*). Rector is right. Come on, come on!

BURKE

(*to RECTOR*). Dickson escaped me again, (*Holding up a coat-tail.*) and sure, this is all that remained of him, as he jumped out of the window.

RECTOR

(*to BURKE*). Yes, Burke, I saw it. (*To the CARVER crowd.*) Come on, boys, come on.

MEYER

(*as the CARVER crowd leave the hall*). Hurrah for our Shohn Carver. Hip, hip!—

THE CARVER CROWD

(*responding*). Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!
(*Exeunt the CARVER crowd.*)

A VOICE FROM THE DICKSON CROWD

(*as DICKSON and his henchmen reappear on the stage from the left*). Hurrah for Dickson! Hip, hip!—

THE DICKSON CROWD

(*responding as DICKSON doffs his hat*). Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!

(*The curtain drops.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I—Library in Richey's house. The library is lighted, but the hall to the right is dark.

TIME—Early in the evening on a day near the end of May.

ELLA RICHEY in street apparel, and RECTOR with hat in hand, have just entered.

ELLA RICHEY.

Rest a little, Mr. Rector.

RECTOR.

Thank you, Miss Ella.

ELLA RICHEY.

Auntie is in the parlor with a friend.
(*Drawing two chairs to the table.*) I can't tell you how much I enjoyed our visit to the

Art Gallery this afternoon, and now I'll show you some of my own drawings.

RECTOR.

I shall be delighted to see them.

ELLA RICHEY

(taking off her hat and wraps, and placing them on a chair). This is papa's sanctum. *(She goes to the book-case, takes out a number of drawings, places them before RECTOR, and sits beside him.)* I'm so fond of sketching and drawing.

RECTOR

(looking at some of the drawings). You are quite an artist, Miss Richey.

(As ELLA RICHEY wipes a drawing with her handkerchief.) Did I soil it?

ELLA RICHEY.

No, Mr. Rector; only a mark from Mr. Buller's cigar.

RECTOR.

Mr. Buller?

ELLA RICHEY.

Yes, I showed him the drawings a few days ago—Papa wanted me to.

RECTOR

(with a sigh of relief). Oh!

ELLA RICHEY.

Before we were half through he commenced to whistle,—I heard it distinctly.

RECTOR.

To whistle?

ELLA RICHEY.

Yes, and he looked awfully bored.

RECTOR.

Is it possible?

ELLA RICHEY

(*in a semi-serious tone*). Yes, Mr. Rector, and just think of it, papa wants me to marry him.

RECTOR.

Does he—? Do you—? Oh, Miss Ella—

ELLA RICHEY.

What, Mr. Rector?

RECTOR

(*looking at a drawing*). This is grand. Sunrise on Mount Washington.

ELLA RICHEY

(*getting closer to RECTOR and pointing to the drawing*). Here is the inclined railroad.

RECTOR.

Rather risky.

ELLA RICHEY.

The track is provided with safety appliances.

RECTOR.

That lessens the danger. Nevertheless, if the train took a toboggan slide—

ELLA RICHEY.

If we were on it, I would cling (*Blushing and with a smile to* RECTOR.) to somebody.

RECTOR.

To me?

ELLA RICHEY

(*confusedly*). I don't know,—(*Demurely*) perhaps.

RECTOR

(*joyfully*). Ella! Would you cling to me for life?

ELLA RICHEY.

Forever.

RECTOR

(*kissing ELLA RICHEY'S hand*). Ella!

ELLA RICHEY

(*looking up to RECTOR, tenderly*). Alfred!

RECTOR

(*embracing ELLA RICHEY, jubilantly*).
My own!

ELLA RICHEY

(*placing her hand on RECTOR'S lips*).
Hush! Not so loud.

RECTOR

(*in a half-suppressed voice*). From the first moment I saw you, my whole existence has been absorbed in my love for you. And now,—(*With emotion.*) to know that you love me,—to hold you in my arms,—

ELLA RICHEY

(*ecstatically*). Alfred!

RECTOR

(*kissing ELLA RICHEY, rapturously*).
My love, my life!

ELLA RICHEY *disentangles herself from RECTOR'S embrace, and runs to the door to the right.*

ELLA RICHEY

(*looking into the hall-way*). I hope nobody heard us. (*Returning*) Please, Alfred,—

RECTOR

(*clasping ELLA RICHEY'S hands, in a half-suppressed tone*). I shall strive,—It shall be my aim—

ELLA RICHEY

(*interrupting RECTOR, anxiously*). But what will papa say?

RECTOR

(*with a sigh*). Ah,—yes,—what will he say?

ELLA RICHEY.

He must have heard of you.

RECTOR.

But I'm afraid in a way—I'll tell you some other time.

ELLA RICHEY

(*anxiously*). Please, Alfred, tell me now.

RECTOR

(*hesitatingly*). I only wanted to say,—that your father,—

ELLA RICHEY

(*anxiously*). What, Alfred?

RECTOR

(*hesitatingly*). Oh,—you see before I speak to your father, it may be best for me to make more headway in my profession.

ELLA RICHEY.

Papa wasn't at the top of the ladder when he got married.

RECTOR.

For your sake, dearest, I must wait until I obtain a better position, so that your father will more readily give his consent. Nothing could induce me to cause you the least unhappiness by creating ill-feeling between you and your father. I will work hard, and the thought that you return my love will give me strength to do my utmost, and—to wait.

ELLA RICHEY.

Do as you think best, Alfred. Your happiness is mine.

RECTOR

(*kissing* ELLA RICHEY). Dearest!

ELLA RICHEY.

But, Alfred, something tells me,—I feel that there is still another reason why you

hesitate to speak to papa now. Surely, you should let me share all your thoughts.

RECTOR.

I will tell you, love. Your father was opposed to Mr. Carver's election to the City Council, and I was an ardent supporter of Mr. Carver.

ELLA RICHEY

(*joyfully*). I love you all the more for it, Alfred, for having stood by your friend, and if I tell papa how kind Mr. Carver has been to you, then, oh I'm sure, then papa's prejudice will give way to admiration.

RECTOR.

But—

ELLA RICHEY

(*sobbing*). And you know, papa wants me to marry that horrid Mr. Buller. I despise him. He thinks he can marry any woman because he has money,—and he's such a boor.

RECTOR.

Then there must be no delay. I will see your father at once.

ELLA RICHEY.

This evening?

RECTOR.

Yes, dearest.

The clock strikes eight.

ELLA RICHEY

(*anxiously*). It's time for papa to come home; don't let him find you here now. I'll get him into a good humor first.

Both rise and go to the door to the left.

RECTOR.

But if your father objects—?

ELLA RICHEY

(*pointing to the door to the left*). I'll be standing just inside of that room, ready

to run in here and kiss away all objections from papa's lips before he has a chance to make them.

RICHEY

(angrily in the hall to the right). Why is there no light in the hall?

ELLA RICHEY

(in an anxious voice). That's papa's voice. *(Opening the door to the left.)* I will let you out by the side-door. But you must come back soon.

RECTOR

(kissing ELLA RICHEY as he departs with her through the door to the left). I will, dearest.

Exeunt ELLA RICHEY and RECTOR.

Enter RICHEY. *In a fit of anger he throws his hat and cane on the floor. In going to the desk he stumbles against a chair near the table.*

RICHEY

(kicking the chair out of the way and upsetting it). Damnation! *(In kicking away the chair he brushes against the table, causing some of the drawings to fall on the floor.)* Damn this rubbish! *(Sitting at the desk.)* Everything upside down.

Enter MARY RICHEY through the door to the right.

RICHEY

(angrily). Why is there no light in the hall?

MARY RICHEY.

It escaped my notice; I had a visitor.

RICHEY

(as MARY RICHEY arranges the chairs). The room looks like a pig-pen. *(Pointing to the drawings.)* Take away that rubbish.

MARY RICHEY

(picking up the drawings and putting them into the book-case). They are Ella's drawings.

RICHEY.

Take them away. *(As MARY RICHEY takes up RICHEY'S hat and cane, and walks silently out of the room.)* I've had enough annoyance already. *(Striking the desk with his fist after MARY RICHEY'S departure.)* Beyond endurance!

Enter ELLA RICHEY through the door to the left.

* ELLA RICHEY.

Good evening, papa.

RICHEY

(gruffly). What do you want?

ELLA RICHEY

(kissing her father). Kiss you, papa.

RICHEY

(*more tenderly, as ELLA RICHEY strokes his hair*). The more you little ones act like babies, the less you can be trusted. Perhaps you want to palm off some invalid on me again.

ELLA RICHEY.

No, papa, no invalid, I'm ever so happy to assure you.

RICHEY.

So you're happy?

ELLA RICHEY.

Yes, papa;—oh, so happy.

RICHEY.

Well, I know something that will make you still happier.

ELLA RICHEY.

What, papa?

RICHEY.

Buller writes that he'll be here again shortly.

ELLA RICHEY.

That doesn't interest me, papa.

RICHEY

(*shaking his finger at his daughter, playfully*). You can't deceive your old father. I noticed how nice you were to the gentleman, and when you're married to him—

ELLA RICHEY.

I will never marry him, papa.

RICHEY

(*pinching his daughter's chin*). That's the way you girls all talk; don't want to marry, don't want a husband, in spite of the fact that every blamed one of you would rather marry to-day than to-morrow.

ELLA RICHEY.

Yes, papa, if the right one comes.

RICHEY.

Maybe he has come already. (*Pinching his daughter's cheek.*) Ah, ha! I see he has. Your blushes betray you. Perhaps it wasn't so long ago either that you were showing him your drawings, and he was so delighted with them.

ELLA RICHEY

(*confusedly*). Yes,—no, no,—(*In utter confusion.*) Oh, papa,—

Enter MAGGIE through the door to the right.

MAGGIE.

Mr. Meacham.

ELLA RICHEY

(*coaxingly*). You've had enough business worry to-day, papa. Postpone the interview until to-morrow. (*Stroking her father's hair.*) Please, papa.

RICHEY.

I must see him, my dear; (*With a tender look at ELLA RICHEY.*) but, to please

you, I'll try to get rid of him as soon as possible. (*To MAGGIE.*) Tell Mr. Meacham to come in.

Exit MAGGIE through the door to the right.

ELLA RICHEY

(*walking towards the door to the left*). Don't let me wait too long for another kiss, papa. (*Exit.*)

RICHEY.

What a relief to know that I've succeeded in paving the way to her happiness, (*Chuckling*)—with Buller.

Enter MEACHAM.

MEACHAM.

Dickson's suit, contesting Carver's election to the City Council, was not successful. The re-count was in Carver's favor.

RICHEY

(*angrily*). I heard of it before I left the office.

MEACHAM

(drawing a chair to the desk and sitting down). We can't oust him.

RICHEY.

He must be ousted; we must continue our efforts.

MEACHAM

(astonished). After the re-count has increased Carver's majority from thirty-five to fifty votes? *(Handing RICHEY a paper.)* Here are the figures from the different precincts.

RICHEY

(throwing the paper on the desk). That paltry majority should have been rectified when the ballots were counted, on the day of the election. We did it with Tipps in the Second Ward, why not with Carver?

MEACHAM.

The leaders of both parties in his ward tried their best, and would have succeeded,

but for Rector and Carver's other lynx-eyed challengers.

RICHEY.

That fellow Rector is almost as dangerous as Carver himself.

MEACHAM.

You're right, sir, and, you know Rector was the leader of the toughs, who tried to mob Dickson at one of our meetings in the Fourth Ward.

RICHEY

(*angrily*). They should have been clubbed and filled with lead. The rabble that don't respect the law must feel the butt end of it; that's the only remedy.

MEACHAM.

It's too bad that we weren't prepared to give the toughs a warmer reception. Rector, of course, instigated the whole affair.

RICHEY

(*angrily*). No man, in the last campaign, has aggravated me more than that rascal.

MEACHAM.

He prevented the election of Dickson, and his articles in "The Daily Record" helped to defeat some of our other Indians.

RICHEY

(*excitedly*). Only eleven Indians in the Council, nine less than we calculated on. (*More calmly.*) I'm glad though that the silk-stockings President of the City Council reappointed most of the old members of the Lighting Committee, and made Tipps Chairman again.

MEACHAM.

The President did it, because I promised him the future support of our eleven Indians.

RICHEY.

And what is the outlook for bringing some of the other silk-stockings in the City Council over to our side?

MEACHAM.

Notwithstanding Carver's objection, six of them voted for Wiley's street-car franchise.

RICHEY.

Try to get those six under obligation to you. I will place some of my unimproved property on Weston Street at your disposal for that purpose.

MEACHAM.

Have the title transferred to somebody else so that your name don't appear in the deed.

RICHEY.

That can be easily done.

MEACHAM.

How many lots shall I offer them apiece?

RICHEY.

Two twenty-five foot lots, at a nominal price,—practically for nothing. The real value is about five hundred dollars per lot.

MEACHAM

(*rising*). All right, sir.

RICHEY.

You better see Carver also. Offer him four lots. He probably has as much horse-sense as the rest of them, (*With a grim smile.*) Only harder to reach.

MEACHAM

(*departing*). I'll try my best. (*Exit through the door to the right.*)

RICHEY

(*looking over the paper, which MEACHAM handed to him*). Exasperating!

Enter MAGGIE through the door to the left.

MAGGIE.

Mrs. Jones, our washer-woman would like to see you.

RICHEY

(*gruffly*). I have no time.

Enter MRS. JONES through the door to the left.

MRS. JONES.

Oh, Mr. Richey, my poor boy. He's salesman for a grocery firm, and was anxious to get customers; and he let his expenses run up too high. They say there's a shortage of forty dollars. (*Crying*). If it ain't settled by to-morrow, he'll be arrested.

RICHEY.

If he stole, let him suffer the consequences.

MRS. JONES.

He's innocent.

RICHEY.

That's what they all claim to be.

MRS. JONES.

Oh, sir, I beg you—

RICHEY.

No,—it's against my principles to help a thief.

MRS. JONES

(staggering towards the door to the left, MAGGIE following her). Oh, my poor boy!

Exeunt MRS. JONES and MAGGIE.

RICHEY

(looking down reflectively). If it came out that I helped one thief, a whole army of reprobates would apply for assistance. *(Continuing to look at the paper.)* Pshaw! *(Looking up.)* Her only child,—a terrible blow,—maybe I was too hasty. *(He rings the bell.)*

Enter MAGGIE through the door to the left.

RICHEY.

Call Mrs. Jones back.

MAGGIE.

She fell in a faint and then I called the ladies. As soon as she comes to, they'll take her home in the carriage.

RICHEY

(*gruffly*). Tell the woman to quit making a scene,—she can have the money.

MAGGIE.

Miss Ella has already gone upstairs to get it. She's so awful good, and so kind to everybody.

RICHEY

(*sternly*). You may go.

Exit MAGGIE through the door to the left.

RICHEY

(rising and pacing the floor). Well, well,—there's no telling what woman will do. Ella has always been liberal with her pin-money, but now she begins to throw it away. Getting queerer and queerer,—head over heels in love (*Chuckling*)—with Buller. How confused she got a moment ago, when I took her unawares, and she confessed her love for him. It would be wrong to keep her little heart in suspense, and as soon as Buller comes, I'll give him a hint (*Chuckling*) to pop the question. (*Rubbing his hands.*) Everything is going my way, and Buller and I,—what a magnificent team. We'll make business hum. It'll be glorious.

Enter MAGGIE through the door to the right. She presents a card.

RICHEY

(reading the card with astonishment). “Alfred Rector, Attorney at Law.”—What the devil can he want here? Tell him to come in.

Exit MAGGIE through the door to the right.

RICHEY.

Unmitigated nerve. (*Throwing the card on his desk.*) Damned impudence!

Enter RECTOR.

RICHEY

(*looking at RECTOR expectantly*).
Well, sir?

RECTOR.

My lucky star—

RICHEY.

What have I got to do with your lucky star, sir?

RECTOR.

I—I love your daughter.

RICHEY

(*falling back in his chair, and gasping for breath*). What?

RECTOR.

Will you consent—?

RICHEY

(*rising*). No! No! A thousand times no. Away, you beggar.

RECTOR *looks anxiously towards the door to the left.*

RICHEY.

She's engaged to Mr. Buller. (*As RECTOR again looks towards the door to the left.*) Are you deaf, sir? She's engaged to Mr. Buller—Buller of Chicago. Now go. (*Pointing to the door towards the right, as RECTOR takes a step towards the door to the left.*) That way. (*As RECTOR approaches the door to the right.*) Go! (*As RECTOR remains standing on the threshold looking at the door to the left.*) What the devil are you looking at? (*Taking a few steps towards RECTOR and stamping on the floor.*) Go, I say.

Exit RECTOR.

RICHEY

(pacing the floor excitedly). Incredible!
Preposterous! *(He rings the bell.)*

Enter MAGGIE through the door to the left.

RICHEY.

Have the ladies returned?

MAGGIE.

Yes, sir.

RICHEY.

Tell my daughter I wish to see her instantly.

Exit MAGGIE through the door to the left.

RICHEY

(pacing the floor). How did the beggar ever come to know Ella? I didn't know that he was even acquainted with her.

Enter ELLA RICHEY; she remains standing at the door.

RICHEY

(*in suppressed excitement*). Come in, my child. (*Drawing his daughter to the sofa and sitting beside her.*) I wish to speak to you.

ELLA RICHEY

(*clasping her father's hand with both hands*). I know you didn't mean what you said to Mrs. Jones.

RICHEY.

Never mind, my dear, I want to speak to you about something else. (*Sternly*) Do you know a man by the name of Rector?

ELLA RICHEY

(*anxiously*). Alfred? (*With suppressed excitement*). Was Mr. Rector here? Has he spoken to you?

RICHEY

(*pushing his daughter away and rising*). You vixen. (*Pacing the floor excitedly.*) You vixen. (*Threateningly*) Never dare to

speaking that name in my presence again; the beggar, the rascal,—

ELLA RICHEY

(in an emphatic voice as she rises and faces her father). Oh, no, papa, no, no; he's a gentleman, a true gentleman.

RICHEY

(still in a passion). Hold your tongue. *(In a calmer tone as he again leads his daughter to the sofa and sits beside her.)* Ella! *(Clasping his daughter's hand, tenderly.)* My own dear Ella. *(She makes no reply, but looks up at him with tearful eyes.)* You know that Buller, one of the richest men in Chicago, passionately adores you.

ELLA RICHEY

(imploringly). Papa!

RICHEY.

Your kind treatment of Buller has given him the assurance that his affection for you is reciprocated.

ELLA RICHEY.

He's mistaken, papa; I only treated him with the courtesy due to a friend of yours.

RICHEY.

I talked it over with Buller, and he'll shortly come and claim your hand.

ELLA RICHEY

(*emphatically*). I will never be his wife.

RICHEY.

You cannot be in earnest.

Enter MARY RICHEY.

ELLA RICHEY

(*rising*). All the millions in the world could not repay me for the man I love.

RICHEY

(*rising*). You vixen—

MARY RICHEY.

Brother!

RICHEY

(*to ELLA RICHEY*). Intriguing behind your father's back!

ELLA RICHEY

(*proudly*). I should not be worthy of the love of Alfred Rector if I did.

RICHEY

(*in a passion, approaching his daughter threateningly*). Didn't I tell you not to pronounce that name?

MARY RICHEY

(*stepping in front of RICHEY*). Take care, brother, lest you do something you may be sorry for.

ELLA RICHEY

(*in a jubilant voice*). I love Alfred, and I shall always love him,—(*Weeping convulsively and falling into the arms of her aunt.*) always,—always.

RICHEY

(in a towering passion). Out of my sight!

MARY RICHEY

(to ELLA RICHEY). Come, my child.

RICHEY

(to ELLA RICHEY, as his sister leads her towards the door to the right). Under no circumstances leave the house, not even your room, without my permission.

Exeunt ELLA and MARY RICHEY through the door to the right.

RICHEY

(pacing the floor). Ella will thank me yet for protecting her from the consequences of her infatuation. *(He sits down at the desk and rings the bell.)*

Enter MAGGIE through the door to the left.

RICHEY.

That last man, who called on me,—was he ever here before?

MAGGIE

(*hesitatingly*). I don't know, sir.

RICHEY.

The deuce you don't. Was he here often?

MAGGIE

(*hesitatingly*). Oh, I don't know how often.

RICHEY

(*as MAGGIE retreats to the door to the left*). Hold on! Give me the key to the mail box; I'll take out the mail myself after this.

MAGGIE

(*handing RICHEY a key*). Here, sir.
(*Exit.*)

RICHEY

(putting the key into his pocket). No underhand correspondence shall go on.

Enter MARY RICHEY.

MARY RICHEY.

Poor Ella is so excited; I'm afraid she'll be ill.

RICHEY.

Why did you allow that rascal Rector to enter this house?

MARY RICHEY.

You could never get a better son-in-law.

RICHEY

(angrily). Silence!

MARY RICHEY

(placing her arms akimbo). I will speak. When I came to your house fourteen years ago, a year after the death of your wife, I

found your—, I mean Ella, motherless and fatherless.

RICHEY.

Fatherless?

MARY RICHEY.

Yes, fatherless too, for you were so engrossed with business that you seemed to be oblivious to the fact that you had a daughter. I found her surrounded by luxury and comfort, but in the hands of strangers. They told me she was ill, and, indeed, she was ill, yearning for love, her little heart almost broken for want of affection. (RICHEY *falls back in his chair in amazement.*) Taking her in my arms, I kissed her thin lips, and vowed that I would be a mother to her ever afterwards. It was through me, that her cheeks filled out, and her dim eyes became radiant again. Under my guidance she has grown up, and for her sake I have endured your whims and humors; but if you go too far, if you attempt to treat Ella like your stocks and bonds, I will not have it, for she is my child,

mine, mine more than yours, and you shall not sell her like a chattel—for money. (*Going to the door to the right and standing on the threshold.*) You shall not debase her exalted instincts of womanhood, and—you cannot.

(*The curtain drops.*)

SCENE II—Meacham's law-office. There is a window to the left, and a door to the right leading to an ante-room. A desk stands in the center of the stage towards the front. A number of chairs are placed about the room.

TIME—About a week later, at the beginning of June.

MEACHAM *is seated at the desk.*

Enter RICHEY and WILEY.

MEACHAM

(*rising*). Come in, gentlemen. (*He draws two chairs to the desk.*)

WILEY

(handing MEACHAM a package).
Here's fifty-five hundred dollars, the franchise money for the Indians.

MEACHAM

(laying the package on the desk). Alright, sir, I'll attend to its distribution.

RICHEY

(as they all sit down, to MEACHAM).
Did you see Carver?

MEACHAM

(to RICHEY). Not yet, Mr. Richey, but I spoke to the six silk-stockings, who voted for Mr. Wiley's street-car franchise bill. Every single one of them took the two lots, which you told me to offer them, and they didn't pay for them either, and they're all willing to take more.

RICHEY.

That's good news.

MEACHAM.

I heard that RECTOR left the city.

RICHEY.

The beggar wanted to marry my daughter.

MEACHAM.

Is it possible?

RICHEY.

The rascal has been pestering her, and rough treatment was necessary.

MEACHAM.

Good!

RICHEY.

After realizing what a fool he had made of himself, he probably concluded it was best to get away from here.

MEACHAM

(*to* RICHEY). There is a rumor that Mr. Buller of Chicago is to be your son-in-law.

RICHEY

(*to* MEACHAM). Yes, yes,—my daughter is engaged to him,—but the engagement won't be announced for awhile; so please don't say anything about it.

MEACHAM

(*to* RICHEY). Why no, Mr. Richey, of course not.

WILEY

(*laughing*). It's a good thing that we are rid of Rector.

MEACHAM.

Yes, it will be easier to handle Carver.

WILEY

(*to* RICHEY). If Carver comes to terms, what will be the next step?

RICHEY

(*to* WILEY). To have the City Council immediately adjourn over summer; but,

if Carver is successful in opposing an adjournment, he may also be able to force through the Council, resolutions ignoring the Lighting Committee and calling for bids early enough to bring in outside competition, and outside competition we can't tolerate.

Enter CLERK.

CLERK.

Mr. Dickson.

MEACHAM.

Tell him to come in.

Exit CLERK.

WILEY.

No, we can't allow outside competition. It must be kept out at all hazards.

Enter DICKSON.

MEACHAM

(*to* DICKSON). Anything new?

DICKSON

(*to* MEACHAM). Yes, sir. Carver is preparing plans for a municipal gas-plant with the assistance of Evans, the City Engineer.

RICHEY

(*rising*). It beats the devil.

MEACHAM

(*as he and* WILEY *rise, to* DICKSON). Is your information authentic?

DICKSON

(*to* MEACHAM). I have it from Evans' clerk, and he also said that Carver will try to have the Council issue a call for lighting bids as early as possible.

RICHEY

(*to* DICKSON). So he intends to submit his plans after the call has been issued?

DICKSON

(*to* RICHEY). Yes, sir, if the bids, submitted in response to the call, are too high.

RICHEY and WILEY pace the floor, talking to each other in a subdued tone, and gesticulating excitedly.

MEACHAM

(to DICKSON). Anything else, Dickson?

DICKSON

(whispering, to MEACHAM). Yes, sir. (With a side-look at RICHEY and WILEY.) I'll tell you later.

MEACHAM

(with a significant motion towards the door, to DICKSON). All right, sir.

Exit DICKSON.

RICHEY

(to MEACHAM). You must see Carver immediately. Offer him eight lots. If that ain't enough,—Damnation! tell him to make his own price.

MEACHAM

(*to* RICHEY). Very well, Mr. Richey, I'll do so. (*Accompanying RICHEY and WILEY to the door.*) And if "The Daily Record" continues its attacks on us and our friends in the City Council, it may be advisable after all for me to see Smith, the editor and proprietor.

RICHEY

(*to* MEACHAM). I leave the matter entirely in your hands; do as you think best.

Exeunt RICHEY and WILEY.

MEACHAM

(*standing in the door*). Come in, Dickson.

Enter DICKSON.

DICKSON.

Plowman has come back—dead broke.

MEACHAM.

What do I care?

DICKSON.

He saw my rent-sign on the vacant tenement-house, where he formerly lived, and came to my office to inquire after his family. He was drunk.

MEACHAM.

That don't concern me.

DICKSON.

The thought struck me that he was just the man,—that he might,—that we could use him,—if Carver gets too troublesome.

MEACHAM.

What do you mean?

DICKSON.

I told Plowman that his wife and daughter were dead; then I took him to an out-

of-the-way boarding house, and paid his board in advance for a week. Now, if I get some of the newspapers containing my speeches, and let him read of Carver's conduct toward Mrs. Plowman, it will make his hair stand on end.

MEACHAM *walks towards the window to the left. He looks out and mops his forehead with his handkerchief.* DICKSON *follows and eyes him intently.*

MEACHAM.

No, it goes against the grain to resort to such hellish tricks, and I'm sure Richey and Wiley wouldn't go to such extremes either.

DICKSON

(presenting a paper to MEACHAM). A list of my expenses, including Plowman's.

Enter CLERK.

CLERK.

Mr. Tipps.

MEACHAM

(*to* CLERK). Tell him to come in.

Exit CLERK.

MEACHAM

(*to* DICKSON). Come back to-morrow.
(*As* DICKSON *approaches the door.*) Keep
Plowman on the string, and be mum about
it.

DICKSON.

I will, Mr. Meacham.

Enter TIPPS.

DICKSON

(*shaking hands with* TIPPS). Hello,
Tipps, how goes it?

TIPPS.

(*to* DICKSON). First-rate; tip-top.

Exit DICKSON.

MEACHAM

(*shaking hands with TIPPS*). How is the Chairman of the Lighting Committee?

TIPPS.

First-rate, tip-top,—and have you written that speech for me, that speech I've got to make in the Council, if Carver again accuses my committee, that we're trying to delay matters?

MEACHAM

(*taking a paper from the desk and giving it to TIPPS*). Here, Mr. Tipps.

TIPPS

(*reading*). "It is incumbent upon the Committee on Lighting to look into the new details that are continually coming up and require careful scrutiny. The charge of procrastination is entirely unwarranted."

MEACHAM.

Procrastination, Mr. Tipps. It means—

TIPPS.

Procastation, of course.

MEACHAM.

Procrastination, Mr. Tipps; it means delay.

TIPPS.

Of course, it does. (*Looking at the paper.*) And it's a mighty hard job to make heads and tails out of your writing.

MEACHAM.

I'll have it type-written, Mr. Tipps.

TIPPS

(*handing MEACHAM the paper*). Yes, sir; yes, sir, and just weed out those high-falutin' words; nobody understands them anyway.

MEACHAM

(*going towards the door*). Certainly, Mr. Tipps, if you prefer it that way.

TIPPS.

Yes, sir; yes, sir.

Exit MEACHAM.

TIPPS

(taking up and examining the package, which WILEY brought). Hello! (Placing the package back on the desk.) By golly!

MEACHAM

(returning). Take a chair, Mr. Tipps. (As both seat themselves, TIPPS occasionally casting a longing glance at the package.) A type-written copy of your speech will be finished in a few minutes.

TIPPS.

Yes, sir; yes, sir. *(Glancing at the package.)* And can't you give me my five hundred dollars for voting for Wiley's street-car franchise?

MEACHAM.

Give it to you? You ought to know better by this time.

TIPPS

(laughing). Yes, sir; yes, sir.

MEACHAM

(taking a pack of cards from the drawer and handing them to TIPPS). Have a game, Mr. Tipps?

TIPPS.

Yes, sir; yes, sir. Sure.

MEACHAM

(turning away). Shuffle, Mr. Tipps.

TIPPS *shuffles the cards, places them on the table, and looks at the upper card.*

TIPPS.

I've done shuffled the cards.

MEACHAM.

What's the bet?

TIPPS.

Five hundred dollars that the upper card is jack of spades.

MEACHAM.

I bet five hundred dollars that it's not: (*Looking at the upper card.*) Jerusalem! you won. (*Taking a roll of bills from the package on the table, and giving it to TIPPS.*) Take your money.

TIPPS

(*taking the money and putting it in his pocket*). Yes, sir; yes, sir.

Enter CLERK, handing MEACHAM a paper and then departing.

MEACHAM

(*giving TIPPS the paper*). A type-written copy of your speech.

TIPPS

(*accepting the paper*). Yes, sir; yes, sir. (*Putting the paper in his pocket, and look-*

ing at the package on the table.) Say, Mr. Meacham.

MEACHAM.

Well?

TIPPS.

You know I'm chairman of the Lighting Committee, and worked like a beaver that nothing was done.

MEACHAM.

Weren't you lucky enough to win a thousand dollars on that account?

TIPPS.

Let me win another thousand dollars. (*Looking at the package.*) I know you could if you liked, and I deserve the money. Remember the abuse I have to stand.

Enter CLERK.

CLERK.

Mr. Carver.

MEACHAM

(*rising to CLERK*). Tell him to step in.
(*To TIPPS*.) I have no time now, Mr. Tipps.

TIPPS

(*rising and departing with the CLERK*).
Yes, sir; yes, sir; we can talk about it later.
(*Speaking in the adjoining room*.) Hello, Carver! (*Laughing*.) The goose hangs high.

Enter CARVER.

MEACHAM

(*meeting CARVER half way, and shaking hands with him*). I can hardly tell you, my dear sir, how highly I appreciate the honor of your visit.

CARVER.

You wrote that you wished to see me on important business. What is it?

MEACHAM.

I can procure offices for a number of your friends.

CARVER.

On what condition?

MEACHAM.

That you treat the members of the Lighting Committee with a little more consideration.

CARVER.

Acceptance of a bribe in this form would be as wrong as the acceptance of any other bribe.

MEACHAM

(*as CARVER turns to go away*). I didn't mean it that way, Mr. Carver; but, unless you throw some of your idealistic views overboard, you won't accomplish anything.

CARVER

(*again turning to go away*). Good-day, sir.

MEACHAM

(*touching CARVER'S arm*). You musn't take it that way, Mr. Carver. On the con-

trary, I recognize your signal ability, and look upon you as a natural born leader. Exert your talents in the right direction and your political career will be a grand success.

CARVER.

My main ambition is to do my duty.

MEACHAM.

Should it not be possible to harmonize duty and self-interest? (*Pointing to a chair near the desk.*) Sit down for a few minutes, and let me give you an illustration. (*After they have both seated themselves.*) An acquaintance of mine has authorized me to sell eight twenty-five foot lots on Weston street, near Wiley's proposed street car line, —the line which you opposed.

CARVER.

Because the ordinance granting the franchise, expressly authorizes consolidation, and contains no provision for arbitration of labor controversies, or for compensation to

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the city for the valuable privileges granted. It lacks, in fact, every essential safe-guard for the public interest.

MEACHAM

(laughing). Is that all, or can it be that you had any further objections?

CARVER.

Yes, sir; I also had good reasons for believing that money was used.

MEACHAM.

Where's the harm, so long as the ordinance provides the community with a needed commodity?

CARVER.

The evil influence of corruption outweighs its benefits in every instance. Sooner or later it will come out, and undermine public morality to the same extent that the law is impotent to deal with it.

MEACHAM.

I esteem you too highly to take you for one of those cranks opposed to corporations.

CARVER.

I have nothing against corporations that transact their business in a lawful way, but everything against those whose main stock in trade is bribery and corruption. They are a dire menace to public safety.

MEACHAM.

It's bad enough when professional agitators talk that way; men of intelligence should exert themselves to prevent the spread of such ideas, especially among the common people.

CARVER.

There are no common people in this country, and it may be brought home to certain men sooner than they think that they comprise no privileged class, and cannot transgress the law, or disregard the sanctity of an oath with impunity.

MEACHAM.

You seem to be looking for a revolution.

CARVER.

Only through the ballot-box, and through the same enforcement of law and order among the rich as among the poor; through the spread of the conviction, that both the bribe-giver and the bribe-taker are contemptible and dangerous criminals; through the education of public opinion to the recognition of the fact that attorneys and other representatives of notorious corporations should be excluded from active participation in legislative bodies and conventions, and all other political gatherings.

MEACHAM.

But our industrial development has brought on new conditions, and everybody who wants to keep up with the procession, must conform to them, and throw overboard old foggy ideas and prejudices.

CARVER.

Honesty will always remain the only true policy.

MEACHAM.

A more practical one is to make hay while the sun shines, and feather your nest when you have a chance. The more these precepts are followed, the better will business be.

CARVER.

I take as much pride as anybody in the material growth of our country, and I am neither antagonistic to legitimate business, nor to legitimate combinations of capital or of organized labor, for such combinations may be necessary and lead to the harmonious settlement of differences between capital and labor. I am in favor of everything that can be rightfully done to develop our industrial power; and, in removing the trust evils that confront us, nothing should be attempted that emanates from hatred or envy, ignorance or fear, and in my humble opinion there is no better remedy than publicity

obtained through strict federal supervision and control.

MEACHAM.

It's amusing to listen to you, my dear Mr. Carver, but, turning to something else, don't you concede that everybody, who has a chance, should endeavor to share in the present prosperity?

CARVER.

Certainly.

MEACHAM.

Very well, then, my dear Mr. Carver, you shall have a chance also, namely, in that real estate deal. I'll sell you the eight lots very cheap.

CARVER.

What's the price?

MEACHAM.

Only ten dollars per foot, but in the deed we can make it twenty dollars.

CARVER.

The land is worth fully twenty dollars per foot.

MEACHAM.

I will advance the money, and you can repay me at your pleasure.

CARVER.

Apparently your offer has fascinating features.

MEACHAM

(*joyfully*). Hasn't it?

CARVER.

But only on the surface. (*Rising*) No, I decline to be placed under obligation to you, and reject the bribe for some future service, which you evidently want me to perform.

MEACHAM

(*rising*). You're mistaken, my dear Mr. Carver, you misunderstand me. If you don't want to go into the deal, just say so, and

we'll drop it. Nevertheless, I'm a good friend of yours, a damn good friend, and I'll prove it by making you another proposition, that will surpass anything you ever heard of.

CARVER.

I don't care to hear it.

MEACHAM.

It's honorable and above board, and the Standard Gas Light Company has nothing to do with it. You shall retain perfect freedom to vote just as you please on any question that may come up in the City Council. All I expect is for you to say nothing against the ratification of a certain contract that will be recommended by the Lighting Committee, of which, you know, Mr. Tipps is the chairman, and, (*in a tone of extreme friendliness*) my dear Mr. Carver, you may name your own price.

CARVER.

No! I'll do my duty, and stand by the people, who elected me.

MEACHAM.

Bosh, that's campaign talk.

CARVER.

It should be the talk of every honest member of the City Council. (*Exit.*)

MEACHAM.

A strange man, (*Shaking his fist in the direction of the door.*) a conundrum that has to be solved or busted.

(*The curtain drops.*)

ACT IV.

SCENE I—The office of SMITH, the Editor of "The Daily Record." There is a door to the right, opening into a hall-way, a door to the left, opening into SMITH'S private office, and two windows at the back facing the street. A desk stands at the front of the stage to the right, and several chairs and tables, some of them covered with newspapers, stand in different parts of the room.

TIME—Two months later, the beginning of August.

SMITH is seated at the desk.

Enter FERRY, MEYER and BURKE through the door to the right.

SMITH

(rising). How do you do, gentlemen?

FERRY

(*shaking hands with SMITH*). My name is Ferry. (*Pointing to MEYER.*) Mr. Meyer.

SMITH

(*shaking hands with MEYER*). Mr. Meyer.

FERRY

(*pointing to BURKE*). Mr. Burke.

SMITH

(*shaking hands with BURKE*). Mr. Burke.

FERRY.

We come to thank you for supporting Carver in his fight for cheaper lighting.

BURKE.

Begorrah ! he's on top of the heap for sure.

SMITH.

Mr. Carver certainly won a signal victory in getting the Council to make a call for lighting bids.

BURKE.

Sure, a big victory it was, notwithstanding and in spite of the fact that his resolution carried but a single majority.

MEYER

(to SMITH). A whole compoodle of us, it was in Schenk's Saloon dis afternoon, talking about de lightning bits, vich have come in on account of Carver's resolution. Shoo know de bit from de Standard Gas Light Company was de highest; den dare was anotter bit, vich was much lower, and anotter von lower shtill, and den dare was even anotter von yet, shoost half so much, and dis last bit, it was, as shoo know, de von vich was acceptated, because it was de lowest von.

SMITH

(to MEYER). You refer to the bid of Foley.

MEYER

(to SMITH). Shess, Mr. Schmidt, and don't shoo tink dare was someting loose mit dat feller? Who is dat Foley any how?

SMITH

(*to MEYER*). All I know about him is that he lives at Farmington, a small country town.

BURKE.

And then somebody came in with a copy of "The Daily Record," and told Ferry to read what it said about Dickson and Tipps.

SMITH

(*taking a paper from the desk and pointing to an article*). Dickson alias Devlin, the ex-convict, and (*Pointing to another article.*) Tipps, the self-confessed boodler.

BURKE.

It was enough to make a feller feel the shivers creep up his back, and, bejabbers, how did Tipps come to give himself away?

SMITH

(*to BURKE*). I ascertained that he openly boasted of his boodling.

BURKE

(to SMITH). Made no bones about it?

SMITH.

None whatever. So I delegated a reporter to get on friendly terms with Tipps, and then to interview him.

MEYER

(to SMITH). Dese shlick fellers don't tink on it dat dare vas shtill shlicker fellers yet.

FERRY.

The discussion, which followed, became so noisy that it attracted attention outside, causing more people to come in.

MEYER

(to SMITH). And den me and Ferry, and even Boorke, had to make a speech.

BURKE

(to SMITH). Yis, Mr. Smith, even Dutchy had to make a spache. Ivery toime

Carver's name was mintoined, the crowd cheered.

FERRY

(*to SMITH*). Mrs. Burke's name was cheered also.

BURKE

(*to SMITH*). Lit me till you in what conniction. It was this way, whin Oi was tillin' the crowd what Oi'm tillin' you now, which is that a few noights ago Oi was dramin' of that there meetin' where Dickson blaggarded Carver so, and Oi dreamt that Oi was loocky enough for once to git Dickson under mi thumb. Before Oi got through with him, Mary Ann gave me a poke in the ribs, and wanted to know why Oi was after yellin' loike a Comanche Indian, and whin Oi told her, says she—"It's Christian work to give a feller what belongs to him; and, after awhoile, whin Oi thought her asleep agin, she called out—"Patsy!" "What is it, Mary Ann?" says Oi. "Patsy," says she, "if you drame of that Dickson agin, jist lay on an extra lick for me too."

(*Proudly*) Ain't that a foine way for a woman to talk?

SMITH

(*laughing, to BURKE*). Yes, indeed, Mr. Burke.

FERRY

(*to SMITH*). The crowd thought so, too, and when three cheers were proposed for Mrs. Burke, they were responded to with a whoop that made the welkin ring.

BURKE

(*to SMITH*). Sure it did me good to hear it.

SMITH

(*to BURKE*). No wonder.

MEYER

(*to SMITH*). And I sait "De Daily Record," it vas a bully paper, and everybody ought to take it.

FERRY

(*to SMITH*). Immediately a number of persons stepped forward and subscribed their names. (*Handing SMITH a sheet of paper.*) This is the list.

SMITH

(*accepting the list and laying it on the desk, to FERRY*). Thank you, thank you.

FERRY.

Then Meyer, Burke and myself were appointed a committee to come here and tender you the compliments of all who were present, and, (*Shaking hands with SMITH*) in leaving, we express the hope that you will stand by Carver in the future as you have done in the past. Good day, Mr. Smith.

SMITH

(*shaking hands with FERRY*). Good day, Mr. Ferry. (*Shaking hands with BURKE.*) Good day, Mr. Burke. Give my regards to Mrs. Burke.

BURKE.

Sure, Mr. Smith, Oi will.

SMITH

(taking hold of MEYER'S hand and shaking it with both hands). Good day, Mr. Meyer; it was very kind of you to put in a good word for our paper.

MEYER.

It vas a pleasure.

SMITH

(accompanying FERRY, BURKE and MEYER to the door to the right). I shall always be glad to see you, gentlemen; call again.

MEYER

(as he, FERRY and BURKE depart).
Vee vill, Mr. Schmidt.

Excunt FERRY, MEYER and BURKE.

SMITH

(after returning to the desk, and taking up the list, which FERRY gave him).
Forty-eight new subscribers! I hope the article will be equally effective in certain other quarters.

DICKSON

(outside of the door to the right).
Where's the editor?

Enter TOMMY, with a scared face, through the door to the right.

TOMMY.

Somebody wants to see you, sir. He's mad, and he's got a club.

Enter DICKSON, swinging a club.

TOMMY

(as DICKSON enters, to SMITH).
There he is.

DICKSON

(to SMITH). Where's the editor?

SMITH

(*to DICKSON*). What do you wish to see him about?

DICKSON

(*taking a newspaper from his pocket and pointing to an article*). Who wrote that? (*Striking the desk with his club.*) Who wrote that?

SMITH.

The editor, sir.

DICKSON.

Where is he?

SMITH

(*rising*). I'll call him, sir; but excuse me, is your business private?

DICKSON

(*stamping on the floor*). Damn private.

SMITH

(*going to the door to the left and opening it*). Be kind enough then to step into the

private office. (*As DICKSON walks towards the door to the left.*) The editor will be here in a few moments.

DICKSON.

(*entering the adjoining room*). I want to see him bad.

SMITH

(*after closing the door*). Hurry up, Tommy, and get a policeman, two if you can.

Exit TOMMY through the door to the right.

SMITH

(*pacing the floor*). Rather uncomfortable. (*Looking out of the window to the right.*) Great Heavens, there's another suspicious character coming up the street—he's entering the house,—I wonder whether he wants to see the editor too?

O'FINNIGAN

(*outside of the door to the right*). Gee-criminy! I'll fix him.

SMITH

(looking towards the door to the right).
Here he comes.

Enter O'FINNIGAN, somewhat under the influence of liquor.

O'FINNIGAN.

Where's the feller that's doin' the writ-in'?

SMITH.

What writing, sir?

O'FINNIGAN

(taking a newspaper from his pocket and showing an article to SMITH). This here writin'. *(Shaking his fist in SMITH'S face.)* Be yez the feller?

SMITH.

The editor wrote that; I'm only his assistant.

O'FINNIGAN.

Lucky for you.

SMITH

(placing a chair near O'FINNIGAN).
I'll call the editor; please take a chair.

O'FINNIGAN.

It would burn under me, if Oi sat down before seein' the iditor. Geecriminy! to insult a man loike Tipps, the man who got me a job in the street-department. Who iver tackles Tipps—*(Beginning to cry.)* tackles me too. *(Taking a chair and striking the floor with it.)* Watch out!

SMITH

(returning to the door to the right).
Have patience, sir.

O'FINNIGAN *follows SMITH, and strikes the floor with the chair, breaking it until only one of the chair legs remains in his hands.*

O'FINNIGAN.

Oi want to foind the poipe-sneezin' vagabond, that Oi kin wallop him *(Aiming a*

blow at SMITH, but striking the door as the latter dodges to the left.) loike this. *(Swinging his club.)* Where is he?

SMITH

(standing against the wall, warding his head with his left arm, and pointing with his right hand to the door to the left). There! *(As O'FINNIGAN turns around looking at the door.)* Be careful, he's in an ugly humor and has a club.

O'FINNIGAN.

Oi'll fix him, if he be the divil himsilf. *(Spitting in his hand.)* Geecriminy! *(Rushing towards the door to the left.)* I've got him! I've got him! *(After entering the adjoining room.)* Take that! *(Whack.)*

DICKSON

(in the adjoining room). You son-of-a-gun! *(Whack.)*

O'FINNIGAN

(*in the adjoining room to the left*). You skunk.

SMITH

(*closing the door, mounting a chair, and looking through the transom into the adjoining room in which angry outcries and resounding whacks are distinctly heard*). Great heavens! (*Whack.*)

DICKSON

(*in the adjoining room*). Ouch! (*Whack.*)

O'FINNIGAN

(*in the adjoining room*). Damn it! (*Whack, whack.*)

DICKSON

(*in the adjoining room*). You son-of-a gun!

SMITH.

I wonder Dickson could stand it. (*Whack*) That time O'Finnigan got it

(*Whack*) He got another one. But now he grasps the stick with both hands and comes down, (*Whack*)—for mercy's sake, he broke it on Dickson's head. Dickson staggers,—drops his club,—falls,—gets up again; they clinch,—down they go,—roll over each other. Dickson's on top, and pounds the Irishman.

DICKSON

(*in the adjoining room*). I'll teach you not to write about me any more.

SMITH.

Hello! O'Finnigan raises himself and throws Dickson off;—Dickson tackles him again,—they roll over,—this time O'Finnigan gets the best of it;—yes, yes, he's on top.

O'FINNIGAN

(*in the adjoining room*). Who's doin' the writin', me or you, you cantankerous ould potato-faced badger, you? Geecriminy! It's me who'll tache you, you snakin' blag-

gard, you flannel-mouthed bog-trotter, you chicken of Beelzebub.

SMITH.

His fists come down like sledge-hammers. Now he mops the floor with Dickson's face. (*Descending from the chair.*) I can't stand it any longer. (*Opening the door and entering the adjoining room.*) Hold on, hold on.

Enter TOMMY with two policemen through the door to the right. He runs with them into the room to the left.

FIRST POLICEMAN

(*in the adjoining room*). Take'em by the feet;—now,—altogether,—pull!

Enter TOMMY and FIRST POLICEMAN holding DICKSON'S arms, and SMITH and SECOND POLICEMAN holding O'FINNIGAN'S arms. DICKSON and O'FINNIGAN are in tattered apparel and are limping; their hair is disheveled, and their faces are covered with bruises, the

face of the former being so black from dust that it can hardly be recognized.

FIRST POLICEMAN

(to SMITH). Shall we take 'em to the cooler?

SMITH.

Not necessary, officers. *(To TOMMY.)* Get two chairs. *(TOMMY places two chairs a little distance apart at the center of the stage to the front.)* Now seat them.

DICKSON

(as he is assisted to a chair). Oh, my foot.

O'FINNIGAN

(as he is assisted to a chair). Oi wasn't half through with him.

SMITH

(after DICKSON and O'FINNIGAN are seated, to TOMMY). Get a couple of wet towels.

Exit TOMMY into the room to the left.

SMITH

(*to* FIRST POLICEMAN). The gentlemen don't even know each other.

Enter TOMMY with two towels.

SMITH

(*taking one of the towels, to* TOMMY). You attend to Dickson. (*As he and TOMMY put the towels on the heads of O'FINNIGAN and DICKSON.*) So,—this will reduce the swelling.

O'FINNIGAN

(*glaring at* DICKSON). Oi'm itchin', jist itchin',—

FIRST POLICEMAN

(*to* O'FINNIGAN). Be quiet! (*To* SMITH.) How did the Turks get to scrap-ping?

SMITH

(*to* FIRST POLICEMAN). Only a little mistake.

O'FINNIGAN

(*glaring at DICKSON*). Jist itchin',—

FIRST POLICEMAN

(*to O'FINNIGAN*). Shut up! (*To SMITH.*) A little mistake?

FIRST *and* SECOND POLICEMEN,
SMITH *and* TOMMY, *move away to the right, laughing and failing to notice that O'FINNIGAN shakes his fist at DICKSON.*

SECOND POLICEMAN

(*to SMITH*). From the size of the swellings it seems to be a pretty big mistake.

O'FINNIGAN

(*rising and rushing towards DICKSON*). Jist itchin',—

DICKSON.

Help, help!

FIRST POLICEMAN

(as he and SECOND POLICEMAN intercept O'FINNIGAN). At it again, the fighting-cocks.

O'FINNIGAN

(as he is led back to the chair). I'll knock the stuffins out of him yit.

SECOND POLICEMAN

(to O'FINNIGAN). No more monkey business, and don't you forget it.

Enter MEACHAM from the door to the right.

MEACHAM.

What's the matter?

SMITH

(to MEACHAM). Only a mutual misunderstanding, Mr. Meacham.

MEACHAM

(recognizing DICKSON). You!

DICKSON

(with a faint voice). Mr. Meacham.

MEACHAM

(stepping to O'FINNIGAN and recognizing him). And that's O'Finnigan!

DICKSON

(in a plaintive voice). O'Finnigan?

MEACHAM

(going to DICKSON). Yes, O'Finnigan, who hangs around in Tipps' saloon.

DICKSON

(gasping for breath). And not the editor?

MEACHAM

(pointing to SMITH). That's the editor.

DICKSON

(falling back in his chair, in a faint voice). Carver's at the bottom of this.

SMITH

(*to* DICKSON). No, Mr. Dickson, not at all, it's only a case of mistaken identity.

O'FINNIGAN

(*pointing to* DICKSON). And Oi took that chump for the iditor. Who's the old galoot any how?

MEACHAM

(*to* O'FINNIGAN). Dickson, a friend of Tipps; they were in the council together.

O'FINNIGAN

(*falling back in his chair*). Geecriminy!

SMITH

(*to* TOMMY). Get their hats. (*To* O'FINNIGAN, *as* TOMMY *runs into the adjoining room to the left*). Will you be able to get home?

Re-enter TOMMY *with the hats.*

O'FINNIGAN

(to SMITH). Oi'll try it.

FIRST POLICEMAN

(*laughing, as TOMMY puts the hats on top of the towels on O'FINNIGAN'S and DICKSON'S heads*). They do look funny.

O'FINNIGAN

(*limping away through the door to the right as SECOND POLICEMAN and TOMMY join in the laughter*). What will Tipps say?

MEACHAM

(to the POLICEMEN). Thanks for your services.

FIRST POLICEMAN

(to MEACHAM). Don't mention it. (To SECOND POLICEMAN.) Come on, pard.

Exeunt POLICEMEN, shaking with laughter, through the door to the right.

MEACHAM

(*to* DICKSON). How is it with you?

DICKSON

(*endeavoring to rise*). Oh, my foot!

SMITH

(*to* MEACHAM). Shall I send for a carriage?

MEACHAM

(*to* SMITH). If you please.

SMITH

(*to* TOMMY). Get a carriage, Tommy.

Exit TOMMY *through the door to the right.*

SMITH

(*to* DICKSON). Come and lie down on the sofa in my private office.

DICKSON

(*to* SMITH). Yes sir, if you please. I feel so tired. (*As* SMITH *leads him into*

the adjoining room to the left.) Slow, please. Oh, my foot!

MEACHAM

(after SMITH and DICKSON have entered the adjoining room). It serves him right. His own fault; a bigger fool than I thought.

Re-enter SMITH.

SMITH

(pointing to one of the chairs at the center of the stage to the front). Be seated.

MEACHAM

(as both seat themselves). Permit me, first of all, to congratulate you upon the marvelous progress of "The Daily Record" under your management.

SMITH.

Thank you, Mr. Meacham, and what can I do for you?

MEACHAM

I came to tell you that it will be profitable to stop creating prejudice against the Standard Gas Light Co.

SMITH

(*laughing*). Have you found out at last that small toads have poison also?

MEACHAM.

I have always had profound respect for your editorial ability.

SMITH.

We are not ethereally enough constituted to live on wind, and, unless something more substantial is offered, we see no reason for changing our present policy. (*Going to the desk and picking up a paper.*) It pays. (*Returning with the paper.*) Look here. Forty-eight new subscribers. Besides, we have gathered a lot of valuable material. (*Going to the desk and flinging the paper on it.*) Just a minute. (*Picking up another paper*

and returning with it to MEACHAM.)
This is a part of 'Tipps' interview, which we haven't used yet. (*Resuming his seat and reading.*) "With a sardonic smile on his face, Tipps pointed to the new billiard-hall-annex to his saloon, and said: 'Some of the coin for that there outfit came from the election boodle I got from Smiley, but most of it came from the boodle I got from the other high-cockalorum of the gas company.' "

MEACHAM.

Your reporter lies when he intimates that Tipps ever received a bribe from me.

SMITH.

Perhaps he didn't have you in mind at all.

MEACHAM

* (*confusedly*). No, no, maybe he didn't; of course he didn't;—of course not. But I pledge my word of honor that the books of the Standard Gas Light Company fail to reveal the expenditure of a single cent for wrong purposes.

SMITH

(*rising*). You don't say so? (*Going to the desk and returning with another paper.*) Here's a stunner. (*Resuming his seat.*) It will be in the paper to-morrow. (*Reading*) "That Foley is a dead-beat, is the verdict of his townsmen, and the gist of the information, which our reporter obtained about him in Farmington. His wife runs a millinery store. She is a hard-working, thrifty little woman, and has to support her lazy husband, who has not been known to do any kind of work for years, except occasionally to close the shutters of his wife's store."

MEACHAM

(*angrily*). Poppy-cock.

SMITH

(*continuing to read*). "And now the same dead-beat, the same old shutter-closer, comes to this city and makes the lowest bid for the lighting contract, depositing twenty-five hundred dollars as security that, within ten days of the opening of his bid, he will file a

bond for two hundred thousand dollars for the faithful performance of the work specified in it. His offer is so low that its bogus nature is clearly apparent. The time to furnish a bond will probably be extended by the Lighting Committee, but eventually he will throw up his contract and forfeit his security of twenty-five hundred dollars. Months of delay in the letting of the lighting contract may be caused by his action. It is generally believed that Foley is a hireling of straw of the Standard Gas Light Company to enable it to gain time, and thus remove the element of competition upon which the city necessarily depends for a legitimately advantageous contract. The result will be that the City will be placed in an exceptionally helpless condition."

MEACHAM.

Beyond endurance!

SMITH

(*reading*). "Shortly before he left Farmington, a gentleman, bearing a striking re-

semblance to Mr. Meacham, called on Foley and had a confab with him in a little room back of his wife's millinery store."

MEACHAM

(rising and shaking with anger). You shall not publish that.

SMITH

(rising). Who will hinder us?

MEACHAM.

What will you take to stop your opposition?

SMITH.

What is it worth to you?

MEACHAM.

Say two thousand dollars.

SMITH.

Only two thousand dollars! No, sir! not when you pay four thousand dollars each to

“The Democratic Headlight” and “The Morning Republican.”

MEACHAM.

Suppose I make it four thousand dollars?

SMITH.

That sounds different.

MEACHAM.

And from time to time you will insert articles from me.

SMITH.

No, sir; I will obligate myself to neutrality, but to nothing beyond that.

MEACHAM.

But other editors—

SMITH

(*interrupting* MEACHAM). If they accept articles, insinuating that Carver was bought up by one of the competitors of the

Standard Gas Light Company, it is no reason that I should lie also. I honor Carver too highly.

MEACHAM.

Is that your ultimatum?

SMITH.

It is, sir.

MEACHAM.

Suppose we offer you more?

SMITH.

It would have no effect. Strict neutrality, sir, nothing else.

MEACHAM.

All right, Mr. Smith. I'll bring the money to-morrow.

Enter TOMMY through the door to the right.

TOMMY

(*to SMITH*). The carriage is waiting, sir.

Exit SMITH into the adjoining room to the left.

SMITH

(in the adjoining room). Come on, Mr. Dickson.

DICKSON

(in the adjoining room). Oh, my foot! Oh! Oh!—

MEACHAM.

Pshaw! I wish the old fool would stop squealing.

Re-enter SMITH supporting DICKSON.

DICKSON.

Ouch! ouch! Oh, my foot!

SMITH

(to MEACHAM). Please help me to get Mr. Dickson into the carriage.

MEACHAM

(as he approaches SMITH and DICKSON, to SMITH). Yes, sir, I will.

SMITH

(*to DICKSON*). Put your arms on our shoulders, and lift up your sore foot. (*After DICKSON has complied with the request.*) That's it.

SMITH

(*to TOMMY*). Open the door Tommy.

TOMMY *opens the door to the right.*

DICKSON

(*taking a few steps towards the door to the right with the assistance of SMITH and MEACHAM*). Ouch! Oh! It's getting worse.

MEACHAM

(*to DICKSON*). Don't make such a racket.

DICKSON

(*departing, supported by SMITH and MEACHAM, through the door to the right, in a half-suppressed voice*). Ouch! Ouch! Oh, oh! Oh,—my foot!

(*The curtain drops.*)

SCENE II—The street in front of CARVER'S book-store. In the front of the stage to the right an alley runs into the street.

· TIME—About ten o'clock in the evening, two weeks later, in the middle of August.

A number of chairs stand on the pavement in front of the store, CARVER occupying one of them. LITTLE JOHN CARVER can be seen in the store reading a book.

Enter FERRY coming up the street from the left.

CARVER.

Hello, Ferry!

FERRY

(sitting down). Say, Carver, I made a break to-day. I was talking to Burke and Meyer about the rumpus in the Council last night, after you suggested the putting up of a municipal gas-plant. I said you had told me some time ago that you intended to bring in a resolution to that effect.

CARVER.

You said nothing out of the way.

FERRY.

They didn't seem to like your confiding the matter to me without saying anything to them.

CARVER.

I'm sorry to hear this, and will endeavor to straighten matters out.

FERRY

(rising). I have to go now,—my wife is at the house of a friend, and probably already waiting for me to take her home;—so good night.

CARVER.

Good night, Ferry.

Exit FERRY up the street to the right.

CARVER

(looking at his watch). Past ten o'clock. Time to close up.

Enter BURKE and MEYER coming up the street from the left.

MEYER

(as he and BURKE sit down, to CARVER). So dare vas someting loose in de Council last night?

BURKE

(to CARVER). And sure it made me jist awful mad whin Oi heard a feller say to-day that it was your fault.

CARVER

(to BURKE). He was partly right, and I'll tell you how it happened. Tipps, the chairman of the Lighting Committee,—

MEYER

(to CARVER). Ain't Dibbs unter investigation?

CARVER

(to MEYER). Tipps himself made a motion that the president of the Council ap-

point a committee of three to investigate his conduct, and, on suggestion of Rixby, the creation of an obligation for a thousand dollars for expenses was incorporated in the resolution.

MEYER

(to CARVER). Maybe de only ting, vich botters Dibbs, is to get a big enough shlice of dose tousand dollars.

CARVER

(to MEYER). The committee will probably exonerate Tipps, because he swore that no bribe had ever been given or even offered to him.

BURKE

(to CARVER). What were you goin' to say about him?

CARVER.

As chairman of the Lighting Committee, he reported last night that the Committee had extended the time, allowed Foley to file a two hundred thousand dollar bond, twenty

days longer, and in spite of my protest and advice, that a new call for bids be made, its action was sustained by a majority of two votes, five of our men voting with the other side.

MEYER.

Dat's bad.

CARVER.

I said, that the only object of Foley's bid, was to procure a delay in the letting of the lightning contract, in the interest of the Standard Gas Light Company.

BURKE.

That's what.

CARVER.

Tipps asked me in derision: "What are you going to do about it?"

MEYER.

Vhat dit shoo say?

CARVER.

Advocate the acquirement of municipal gas-works, I retorted.

MEYER.

Bully for shoo !

BURKE

(*to* CARVER). That was a cracker-jack answer for sure.

CARVER.

I also said that the general tendency of late years, had been to have the manufacture of gas carried on by municipalities, and quoted figures from various cities where this is done. After pointing out the advantages, that would result if we followed their example, I appealed to the Council to protect the citizens from a monopoly that had mulcted them for years, to enable it to pay a yearly ten per cent dividend on a capital stock five times the value of its plant. Turning from one to the other of the five renegades, I told them that subserviency to the interests of the Standard Gas Light Company, at the expense of the City, was a violation of their oaths, and forfeited their

claim to be looked upon as honest men ever afterwards.

MEYER.

And den, Mr. Carver?

CARVER

(to MEYER). When I saw some of the renegades join in the applause, I immediately made a motion for the Council to form itself into a Committee of the Whole, with the president as chairman, to consider, at the earliest possible date, the acquirement by the City of a gas-manufacturing plant before January 1st, when the present contract with the Standard Gas Light Company expires.

MEYER.

And den?

CARVER.

The storm broke loose, and, in the midst of the tumult, the president of the Council, after mumbling something that nobody could understand, shouted out that on mo-

tion of Tipps, seconded by Rixby, the Council had adjourned for a week. But before I left the Council Chamber, three of the renegades shook me by the hand, and promised me their support.

MEYER

(*to CARVER*). And do shoo really tink dat shoo vill bring it trough, dat vee get city gas-voorks?

CARVER.

Even if I am not successful, the projected measure may, nevertheless, serve to coerce not only the Standard Gas Light Company to reduce its price, but also its competitors to do the same, if any of them should unexpectedly remain in the field. Of course, this is confidential.

MEYER

(*to CARVER*). Ve vill be as silent as the grafe about it.

BURKE

(*to CARVER*). Sure, Mr. Carver, at least so far as Oi'm concerned.

MEYER

(*to* CARVER). Shoo know very vell dat shoo can depent on me too yet.

CARVER

(*to* MEYER). Certainly, Mr. Meyer.

MEYER

(*to* CARVER). And I vill tell shoo now vhat I have already tought for a long time, and dat is dat it may be best yet, dat is later on, dat de City supplies de citizens, not only mit gas, but mit all otter such tings, namely dose tings vich day need very bad and must have.

CARVER

(*to* MEYER). I think so, too, Mr. Meyer, and it is my firm conviction, that the establishment of public ownership, for all public utilities, is the only remedy for a disease gnawing at the vitals of our country. But, in order to be free from danger, a far-reaching national, state, and municipal

civil service reform must precede its general adoption. First of all, appointments to offices and their retention must be dependent on merit, and removed from the demoralizing influences of machine politicians and ringsters.

MEYER

(*to CARVER*). Why, of course, Mr. Carver, for if dat, vhat shoo say dare, vas not done first, den pooblic ownership, it would have too much shenanikens and monkey biziness in it, and would gif, for exemple, de politicians, running dis City, such a big push behind dem dat no Deibel could effer kick dem out again.

CARVER

(*to MEYER*). I understand you, Mr. Meyer; you would like to see public ownership established on a sound and healthy basis, free from schemes of any kind, save those for the public welfare.

MEYER

(*to* CARVER). Exectly, Mr. Carver, exectly; and now dare vas anotter ting,—

BURKE

(*rising, to* MEYER). Holy Patrick, you Dutchman, Moyer, don't be after givin' us another spache. If we don't git to work, our customers won't git their bread to-morrow.

MEYER

(*rising*). Dat's so, Irish, but vhat I vas going to say, it von't take me no more den a minute yet, and it vas dis; (*to* CARVER.) namely, dat Johanna Wacker, our servant-girl, vants to send a letter mit money to Shermamy, and I told her to see shoo about getting a draft.

CARVER

(*rising, to* MEYER). I'll be glad to accommodate her.

MEYER

(*to* CARVER). Tank shoo, Mr. Carver.

CARVER

(*to* MEYER). How's the bakery business?

MEYER

(*to* CARVER). Every ting would be nice if Boorke would only quit to be so coountry as a mool again sometimes.

BURKE

(*to* CARVER). And sure it's his own fault. Why must Moyer always be after havin' the last word?

MEYER

(*going up the street to the right, angrily to* BURKE). It would be too foolish to be shcolding longer around mit shoo here yet. —Donnerwetter! (*Exit up the street to the right.*)

BURKE

(*following MEYER*). Hold on, Moyer, what's the matter? (*Exit after MEYER.*)

Enter MRS. CARVER from the store.

MRS. CARVER.

Were Mr. Burke and Mr. Meyer quarrelling?

CARVER.

Only a little spat as usual.

Enter JOHANNA WACKER coming down the street from the right.

JOHANNA WACKER

(*to CARVER*). Ich diene bei Meyer's, und wollte Sie bitten,—

CARVER

(*to JOHANNA WACKER*). Ich weiss schon. Kommen Sie herein.

CARVER *and* JOHANNA WACKER *enter the store.* LITTLE JOHN CARVER

comes out, he and his mother sitting down near each other, both facing the street to the right.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

Mamma, that's Meyer's servant girl.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER *continues to speak to his mother in a subdued tone, and CARVER is seen writing from MISS WACKER'S dictation. She also hands him a little package. Hereupon they carry on a conversation.*

Enter DICKSON and PLOWMAN, coming down the alley from the right. They remain standing near the street.

DICKSON

(pointing to CARVER'S house). Carver lives over there. The door has an old fashioned lock, and I can easily pick it. You'll find it open. I've got the cop on this beat boozy already. He won't bother you.

PLOWMAN.

I can't do it.

DICKSON.

Don't be chicken-hearted.

PLOWMAN.

If harm should come to innocent ones.

DICKSON.

No fear of that. I'll turn on the fire alarm in time. Carver's store will be gutted; that's all.

PLOWMAN.

No, I can't.

DICKSON.

Think of your wife, and the wrong Carver has done her, and you too. (*Taking hold of PLOWMAN'S arm, and pointing to CARVER, who steps up to JOHANNA WACKER and puts his hand on her shoulder.*) Look, look! See what he's doing now,—the lecherous rascal. Remember your wife.

PLOWMAN.

I'll do it; I'll be here.

DICKSON

(drawing PLOWMAN back as CARVER and JOHANNA WACKER slowly approach the door of the store). Stand back; they're coming out. After the job is done, run to your boarding house. To-morrow I'll give you five hundred dollars, and a railroad ticket for any place you wish to go to.

Exeunt DICKSON and PLOWMAN up the alley to the right.

JOHANNA WACKER

(as CARVER steps out of the store with her). Nochmals meinen herzlichsten Dank.

CARVER

(shaking hands with JOHANNA WACKER). Bitte sehr.

JOHANNA WACKER departs up the street to the right.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER

(*as his father sits down, laughing*). Her hands are so rough and clumsy.

CARVER

(*to LITTLE JOHN CARVER*). Come here, my son. (LITTLE JOHN CARVER *seats himself on his father's knee.*) Her hands got rough in the performance of hard work. She told me that she was hired out at the age of fourteen, and, though she always gave her parents a part of her wages, she saved one hundred and fifty dollars in the course of five years, which she gave to the family of a married sister to enable them to come to America.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

That was nice, papa.

CARVER.

After a couple of years she again managed to save a little money, and used half of it to come to America herself, and

gave the other half to her parents. Although in this country only a year, she has already saved a small sum, which she has just brought me to send to her folks at home.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER

(to his father). Are there many people like Miss Wacker?

CARVER.

Yes, my boy, there are thousands like her, and it does one good to meet one of them.

Enter MR. and MRS. FERRY, coming down the street from the right.

MRS. FERRY

(to MRS. CARVER). Quite a surprise to find you folks up yet.

MRS. CARVER.

Yes, Mrs. Ferry, it is a little late.

MRS. FERRY

(*to* CARVER). We almost ran into Dickson a few minutes ago.

FERRY

(*to* CARVER). He was with another man, both with their hats partly drawn over their faces. They were whispering to each other, and looking in this direction.

MRS. CARVER

(*to* CARVER). Please, John, be on your guard.

CARVER

(*to* MRS. CARVER). How often have I told you, my dear, that your fears are groundless.

MRS. CARVER

(*to* CARVER). The way Dickson looked at you, when he was in the store on the evening of your nomination,—his vicious glances,—they still haunt me.

FERRY

(*to* MRS. CARVER). "The Daily Record" has fully exposed Dickson's character. He's no longer able to do any mischief.

MRS. FERRY

(*to* MRS. CARVER). Since that affair with O'Finnigan, Dickson has been the laughing-stock of the community. But it's time to go now.

CARVER

(*to* MRS. FERRY). What's your hurry, Mrs. Ferry?

MRS. FERRY

(*to* CARVER). It's getting very late; we must go home. (*Taking hold of FERRY'S arm.*) Come on.

FERRY.

Good-night, all.

CARVER and MRS. CARVER.

Good-night.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER

(as MR. and MRS. FERRY depart down the street to the left). Good-night. (He carries in the chairs.)

MRS. CARVER

(to CARVER). Can I help you in anything?

CARVER.

No, my dear, you have done more than your share already to-day.

Exeunt MRS. CARVER and her son into the store. CARVER follows them and locks the door.

Enter DICKSON, coming down the street from the right, as CARVER turns the gas lower.

DICKSON

(to himself). I'll open the door now, and turn off the gas. Gallagher is boozy enough to see anything I want him to see.

Enter PLOWMAN, coming down the alley from the right, as DICKSON enters the store. PLOWMAN remains standing at the mouth of the alley.

PLOWMAN

(looking up and down the street). No-body in sight. It's almost time. (Running towards DICKSON, as the latter comes out of the store, in a half-suppressed voice.) Say, Dickson! Dickson!

DICKSON

(meeting PLOWMAN in the middle of the street). What is it, Plowman?

PLOWMAN.

Is it time? Shall I go in?

DICKSON.

Not yet. I first want to pilot the cop from Ballard's saloon to Schenck's place. *(Exit up the street to the right.)*

PLOWMAN

(*looking towards CARVER'S house as he returns to the mouth of the alley*). Only his house will be gutted; that's all. Nothing to what he deserves. (*Standing at the mouth of the alley and shaking his fist in the direction of CARVER'S house.*) He ought to be shot down like a mad dog,—strung up. (*Looking up the street to the right.*) Here comes Dickson with the cop.

Enter DICKSON and GALLAGHER, a policeman, coming down the street from the right, the latter very much under the influence of liquor.

GALLAGHER

(*hiccupping*). N—n—n—no use talking, B—B—B—Ballard makes a fine c—c—c—cock-tail. (*Hiccupping*) I—I—I—it goes down l—l—l—like oil.

DICKSON.

Schenck at the other end of the street beats him.

GALLAGHER

(*hiccupping*). G—g—g—get out.

DICKSON.

Let's go there.

GALLAGHER.

I'm w—w—w—with you.

DICKSON

(*as they pass CARVER'S store*). Hello!
there's Carver still in the store.

GALLAGHER

(*looking into the store*). W—w—w—
what?

DICKSON

(*looking into the store*). Carver's making a grand clean-out. He has swept together a big pile of paper and stuff in the rear of the store.

GALLAGHER

(*continuing to look into the store*). I—
d—d—d—don't see Carver.

DICKSON

(*touching GALLAGHER'S arm*). Don't you see him back there in the corner? Don't you see him?

GALLAGHER.

Ye—ye—ye—yes, yes,—I guess so.

DICKSON

(*drawing GALLAGHER away*). It's strange that Carver should pile up a lot of inflammable rubbish at this time of the night.

GALLAGHER.

You b—b—b—bet it is.

DICKSON

(*supporting GALLAGHER as he staggers*). Steady, old man.

GALLAGHER

(*with a sigh*). Oh,—I'm so w—w—w—weak; I can hardly s—s—s—stand. That

c—c—c—cocktail,—l—l—l—let's get it. It'll
b—b—b—brace me up.

DICKSON

(as GALLAGHER, with his assistance,
staggers down the street to the left). All
right, Gallagher, come on. Schenck's cock-
tail will cure you.

Exeunt DICKSON and GALLAGHER
down the street to the left.

PLOWMAN runs across the street and
enters the store.

(*The curtain drops.*)

ACT V.

SCENE I—A room on the first floor in FERRY'S house. The side towards the rear of the stage has two windows, and faces a street. A door to the left leads to a hall, and a door to the right to an adjoining room. A table stands near the right side of the room to the front, and a sofa under one of the windows. Several pictures stand on the floor in a corner. A number of chairs stand about the room.

TIME—Early in the evening, towards the end of August, six days after the time of Scene II of Act IV.

A meeting of the City Council is to be held later in the evening.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER *and* **ANNIE PLOWMAN** *are seated on the sofa.*

ANNIE PLOWMAN.

I liked it at your papa's house ever so much more than here. But wasn't that an awful night, the night of the fire?

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

Yes, it was. Mamma smelled the smoke first, and she told papa, and, when papa opened the door to go down stairs, a whole lot of black smoke got in the room.

ANNIE PLOWMAN.

And then your mamma took me in her arms,—

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

And papa took me.

ANNIE PLOWMAN.

And they carried us out by the back-stairs.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

And then papa told mamma to take us to Mr. Ferry's house. Everything in the store

seemed to be on fire ; but papa wasn't afraid, and I saw him run into the store and throw out books.

ANNIE PLOWMAN.

And at Mr. Ferry's house we were put to bed, but I couldn't sleep for a long while.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

I couldn't sleep either, and kept awake till papa came. I thought he would be awful sorry about the fire, but he wasn't at all. He told mamma we ought to be thankful that we had escaped, and that the engines had come in time to save our house from being burned down, and keep the fire from spreading ; and when I heard papa speak that way, I felt all right again, and before I knew it, I was sound asleep.

ANNIE PLOWMAN.

I hope that the house will soon be fixed up again.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

Papa hasn't got the money yet. There were lying stories in some of the newspapers about the fire, and that's why the Insurance Company won't pay papa's insurance.

ANNIE PLOWMAN.

What will he do about it?

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

He got Lawyer Case to help him.

Enter CARVER.

CARVER

(kissing the children, who run towards him). Well, well! How are my darlings?

ANNIE PLOWMAN

(departing through the door to the left, to CARVER*).* I'll tell auntie you're here.

CARVER.

All right, my dear.

CARVER *sits at the table and looks over some papers.*

CARVER

(*as* LITTLE JOHN CARVER *heaves a sigh*). What's the matter, my boy?

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

I'm only thinking, papa.

CARVER.

About what?

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

About mamma; sometimes, when she thinks nobody is looking, I see tears running down her cheeks.

CARVER

(*tenderly*). Never mind, my boy; after the clouds have passed away the sun shines all the brighter. (*Rising and gently pushing* LITTLE JOHN CARVER *to the door to the left.*) And now go and play with

Annie. To-morrow, maybe, I'll join in the play.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

(*departing*). We'll be ever so glad.

Enter FERRY as CARVER returns to the desk.

FERRY

(*sitting down on a chair near the desk*).
Working on your speech for to-night's council meeting?

CARVER.

No, Ferry, I'm looking over my accounts to see how much money I can collect; but I'm afraid it won't be half enough. Wiley informed me to-day that he would foreclose the mortgage on my house if not paid on September 15th, when it becomes due.

FERRY.

By that time you'll have your insurance money.

CARVER

(*with a bitter smile*). I have to look around for another lawyer; Case withdrew.

FERRY

(*in surprise*). After he agreed to procure a settlement with the Insurance Company, eight thousand dollars for the goods, and two thousand for the house?

CARVER.

When I went to his office this afternoon, Mr. Case gave me back the hundred dollar retainer, which I had paid him, and said, that, on account of an important lawsuit, he was not in a position to serve me any longer.

FERRY.

It's the most dishonorable conduct I ever heard of, and I'm convinced the Standard Gas Light Company has something to do with it. By the way, does Mrs. Carver know anything about this?

CARVER.

I thought it best to tell her.

FERRY

(*looking at CARVER with compassion*).
Have you written to Rector?

CARVER.

I did, and expect a reply to-day.

FERRY.

I'll raise twenty-five hundred dollars on this house, and let you have the money.

CARVER

(*grasping FERRY'S hand*). Under no circumstances will I allow you to jeopardize the welfare of your family for me.

Enter MRS. CARVER from the left, smiling.

MRS. CARVER.

Please come to supper, Mr. Ferry. (*To CARVER as she takes hold of his arm.*)
Come on, John.

Exeunt CARVER, MRS. CARVER and FERRY through the door to the left.

PLOWMAN appears at the open window above the sofa with a revolver in his hand.

PLOWMAN

(cautiously putting his head through the window and scanning the interior of the room). No rest; I had to return. I'll catch him alone, and take sure aim. One bullet for him and one for me. Then it's all over.

Enter LITTLE JOHN CARVER and ANNIE PLOWMAN. PLOWMAN quickly withdraws his head as they enter.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER

(as he and ANNIE PLOWMAN seat themselves on the sofa). Papa said, that, maybe, he'd play with us to-morrow.

** PLOWMAN appears at the window again. Recognizing his daughter, he places his hand to his ear to catch every word).*

ANNIE PLOWMAN.

Uncle and Auntie Carver are always so nice, and they were so kind to mamma. At first only auntie came, and then when mamma got so awful sick, auntie often brought uncle along; and mamma told me that I should always love Mr. and Mrs. Carver, and, after mamma died, they told me that they would be my papa and mamma until my own papa returned.

PLOWMAN

(in a voice of distress as he hurries away). What have I done?

ANNIE PLOWMAN.

What was that?

LITTLE JOHN CARVER

(looking out of the window). I can't see anything.

ANNIE PLOWMAN

(as LITTLE JOHN CARVER resumes his seat on the sofa). And poor uncle has so much trouble.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

Couldn't we do something to make papa feel happy,—if only for a little while? (*Rising and going to the pictures in the corner.*) I'll hang grandma's picture (*Pointing to the table.*) over papa's table, just as it hung at home. That will surprise him, won't it? (*He takes his grand-mother's picture and places it on the table.*)

ANNIE PLOWMAN

(*rising*). You need a hammer and a nail.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER

(*taking a nail out of his pocket*). I've got a nail, (*Getting on a chair and taking a paper weight from the table.*) and we'll use this for a hammer. (*As he drives a nail into the wall.*) It works all right. (*Hang-
ing up the portrait.*) See!

ANNIE PLOWMAN.

They're coming.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER

(getting down from the chair). Don't say anything.

Enter CARVER and MRS. CARVER, the former sitting down at the table.

MRS. CARVER.

Go upstairs for awhile, children.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER

(as he and ANNIE PLOWMAN depart through the door to the left). Yes, mamma.

MRS. CARVER

(smiling). I'll show you that I can raise a little money too.

CARVER

(as MRS. CARVER departs through the door to the right). Don't do anything foolish, my dear. *(To himself.)* Poor little woman,—always cheerful and smiling,—and I know that her heart is almost breaking for my sake.

MRS. CARVER

(returning with a jewel-box). This is worth at least something.

CARVER.

No, my dear, no, no.

MRS. CARVER.

Please, John.

CARVER

(taking a piece of jewelry out of the box).
Your mother's ring.

MRS. CARVER

(putting her arm around CARVER'S neck). Be good, John.

CARVER.

Dearest!

MRS. CARVER

(going to the room to the right). I'll find more. *(Exit MRS. CARVER into the*

room to the right, leaving the door partly open.)

CARVER

(brokenly). Her devotion almost unnerves me.

Enter MRS. FERRY.

MRS. FERRY.

A gentleman wishes to see you.

CARVER.

Please tell him to come in.

Exit MRS. FERRY.

Enter MEACHAM.

MEACHAM

(as he shakes CARVER'S hand). How are you, my dear sir? *(Seating himself to the left of CARVER.)* I'm sorry you've had such bad luck, and I'm ready to do everything in my power to help you.

CARVER.

I desire no assistance from you.

MEACHAM.

Is that the way to talk to a friend, a true friend?

CARVER.

I have work on hand, and should like to finish it before going to the council meeting to-night.

MEACHAM

(*surprised*). To the council meeting? And let your enemies tell you to your face, that you set your store on fire to get the insurance? You know the papers openly intimate this, and have published statements made by Dickson and Policeman Gallagher, to the effect that they saw you acting in an extremely suspicious manner just before the fire broke out. There is no doubt that the grand-jury will indict you.

CARVER.

I shall go, nevertheless.

MEACHAM

(*angrily*). Preposterous! Any effort on your part to present plans for municipal gas-works will be voted down. You'll only make a laughing stock of yourself. (*Laughing*) It's ridiculous! Have you considered the cost of putting up a gas-plant?

CARVER.

Col. Evans, the City Engineer, one of the best engineering authorities in the country, has furnished me with an estimate.

MEACHAM.

Where would the money come from? The City is already bonded up to its constitutional limit.

CARVER.

It will not be difficult to induce a syndicate of capitalists to put up the plant, and take a five per cent mortgage on it; and the City can easily pay for it out of the profits accruing from its operation, without borrowing a dollar, or floating a single bond.

MEACHAM.

It wouldn't be legal.

CARVER.

The City Counsellor says it would.

MEACHAM

(*snapping his fingers*). I don't care that for his opinion. It's rank foolishness to entertain the idea of municipal gas-works.

CARVER.

It is perfectly feasible.

MEACHAM.

Its bugaboo nature is too apparent to scare us, and especially so in view of the fact, that the price asked by the Standard Gas Light Company is not excessive.

CARVER.

Pardon me, sir, it is excessive.

MEACHAM.

You're mistaken.

CARVER.

Colonel Evans and myself investigated the subject thoroughly.

MEACHAM.

Professor Bridgman, of Kensington College, testified before the Lighting Committee that the price is perfectly fair, and that it is doubtful if gas can be sold cheaper without incurring a loss.

CARVER.

Kensington College owns some shares of the Standard Gas Light Company, and the testimony of Professor Bridgman shows how the insidious ramifications of a dishonest corporation may even infest an institution, which should, above everything else, be the guardian and promoter of public morals.

MEACHAM.

But not of idealistic idiosyncrasies. I glory in Professor Bridgman's practical business judgment.

CARVER.

In making a false statement?

MEACHAM.

The Lighting Committee considers his testimony to be correct, and there is no doubt, that not a single one of the other bids is bona fide; they were only put in to get a rake-off from the Standard Gas Light Company.

CARVER.

I shall do my utmost to uphold the alternative: Municipal gas-works, or cheaper gas for the City and private consumers.

MEACHAM.

Private consumers don't concern you.

CARVER.

The Council can regulate the price of gas for private consumption.

MEACHAM

(loudly). It cannot.

CARVER.

Even as far back as twenty years ago, the Legislature conferred on the City Government the power to regulate the price and quality of gas for private consumption, and the power has never been revoked.

MEACHAM

(rising, angrily and loudly). Damn the Legislature! I defy you and the Council to make the attempt.

CARVER.

I scorn your defiance.

Enter FERRY through the door to the left, unnoticed by CARVER and

MEACHAM. *He remains standing in the door-way.*

MEACHAM

(cooling down and seating himself again). I beg your pardon; excuse my hasty words. *(Suppliantly)* But be assured that your opposition is no longer of any significance. Even "The Daily Record" has shut down on you, and a majority of the council-men are on our side. Besides, you must bear in mind that we possess an irresistible power,—Money, and that we are ready to spend it freely. Your stubbornness may increase the expense, but eventually we shall win. You cannot alter existing conditions; so conform to them, and cease your opposition. Stay away from the council meeting to-night, and you won't be the loser.

CARVER

(anxiously, as he rests his elbows on the desk and covers his face with his hands). Leave me.

MEACHAM.

Listen to me, for the sake of your family, listen to me. I have evidence that will clear you of suspicion in connection with the fire. Your insurance shall be paid, and the mortgage on your house released. (*Whispering*) As a loan, merely as a loan, I will let you have five thousand dollars. (*Receiving no reply from CARVER, MEACHAM takes a package out of his inside coat-pocket and continues.*) I have it with me. (*Putting the package on the table at CARVER'S elbow.*) You will find it on the table. (*Rising and touching CARVER'S arm.*) Good-night, my dear sir.

CARVER *strikes his forehead in despair. He looks up, and recognizes the picture of his mother.*

CARVER.

No! (*Rising and taking the package from the table.*) No! (*Throwing the package at MEACHAM'S feet, and scattering the money on the floor.*) No!

Enter FERRY and MRS. CARVER, the latter regarding CARVER with exulting admiration.

FERRY

(taking hold of MEACHAM by the coat-collar, and shaking him). Pick that up!

MEACHAM.

Don't, Mr. Ferry, don't.

FERRY

(continuing to shake MEACHAM). Pick that up.

MEACHAM.

It was only intended for a loan.

FERRY

(bending MEACHAM down and continuing to shake him). Pick that up. *(As MEACHAM complies with the request.)* And that, and that, and that. *(After MEACHAM has picked up the money.)* Now get out. *(Pushing MEACHAM to the door to the left.)* Get out.

Exeunt FERRY and MEACHAM through the door to the left.

MRS. CARVER

(flinging herself into CARVER'S arms and kissing him, while a noisy tumult is heard outside). Though we lose everything, I shall always be happy as long as I have you,—

Enter LITTLE JOHN CARVER.

MRS. CARVER

(continuing). And our little boy. *(Taking hold of her son's hand.)* Kiss your father.

LITTLE JOHN CARVER

(as his father lifts him up). Papa's crying.

CARVER

(kissing his son). No tears of sorrow, my boy, but of joy. I can still, without flinching, look every one straight in the face.

Enter FERRY, BURKE and MEYER through the door to the left.

CARVER

(putting down his son and grasping FERRY'S hand). Friend!

FERRY

(to CARVER). No prouder distinction could be conferred upon me.

MEYER

(shaking hands with CARVER). Ferry, he has told us everyting already.

BURKE

(shaking hands with CARVER). Holy Patrick! what a man!

MEYER.

A man of de reg'lar old shot and corn.

CARVER

(to MEYER). I've only done my duty.

BURKE

(*to* CARVER). Sure, no political office is too hoigh for you, and you kin depind on it for sartain, that we'll sind you to Congress yit.

CARVER *makes a deprecatory motion of the hand to* BURKE.

MEYER

(*to* BURKE). Donnerwetter noch mal! Carver, he shan't go to Congress; vee need him yet too bad at home, and, after his time in de City Council is over, he must go back to de Shkool Board.

BURKE

(*to* MEYER). He's too big a man.

FERRY

(*to* BURKE). There's not a man living who's too big for the School Board, and it would be a blessing if a man like Carver embodied some of his sentiments in our system of public education. (*To* CARVER.) You

did good work when you were a member of the School Board a few years ago, and you often told me that the principles of humanity should be implanted at school, and that there the sacredness and importance of obedience to parents, as well as to the laws of the country, and of justice, should be taught.

CARVER.

And from living examples, and in a manner adapted to the understanding of the children.

FERRY

(*to CARVER*). Then they would grow up to be good citizens, conscious of their obligation to the community, and aware of the fact that the line, separating right from wrong, is the same in politics as in everything else.

CARVER.

Yes, political reform must begin in the school-room.

MEYER

(to CARVER). Dat's vhat I say, and for dat vary reason, so dat such a reform is shtarted in our own shkools here, vee vant shoo to shtay home and go back to de Shkool Board.

BURKE

(to MEYER). And sure you're roight, Moyer.

MEYER

(to BURKE). Hello! What is los mit shoo? It's de first time, in a long time, dat shoo gif me right vonce again.

BURKE

(to MEYER). But sure not the last toime, if you repate agin what you jist said about Carver, and, if you say the same thing over agin, Oi'll forgive and forgit iverything, and on top of it (*Taking off his hat and swinging it.*) Oi'll shout: Hurrah for Carver!

CARVER.

I thank you, gentlemen, for your kind feeling towards me. (*Looking at his watch.*) And now I must go; the Council will meet shortly.

FERRY

(*to CARVER*). I'll accompany you.

MEYER

(*to CARVER*). And so vill me and Boorke. Dat's vhat vee came here for, and, shoost as vee vas coming into de house, vee saw how Ferry vas giving dat Meacham de grand bounce.

BURKE

(*to CARVER*). Bejabers, Meacham landed all in a heap, and roight in the middle of the street.

MRS. CARVER

(*anxiously, to BURKE*). Was he hurt?

BURKE

(*to* MRS. CARVER). No ma'am, for, whin me and Moyer wint up to where he was lyin', Meacham got up in a jiffy, and ske-daddled down the street jist as fast as his lig's could carry him.

CARVER.

Let us go, gentlemen.

Enter RECTOR, *carrying a valise.*

MRS. CARVER

(*in surprise*). Mr. Rector!

CARVER

(*in surprise*). Rector!

RECTOR

(*dropping his valise and grasping CARVER'S hands*). My dear Mr. Carver.

BURKE.

Bully for you, Mr. Rector.

FERRY.

Just in time.

MEYER.

Donnerwetter noch mal! Famos!

BURKE

(*embracing MEYER and dancing around with him*). Donnerwetter! Famos!

(*The curtain drops.*)

SCENE II—*The library in RICHEY'S house.*

TIME—*Early in the afternoon of the following day.*

MAGGIE *is engaged in cleaning the room.*

Enter MRS. FERRY.

MRS. FERRY.

Is Miss Ella home?

MAGGIE.

No, Mrs. Ferry, I believe that she and her aunt went to Mr. Richey's office to ask him to come home early, because he looked so worn out this morning, and I shouldn't wonder if it's all on account of Mr. Meacham. He was here late last night, and raised an awful fuss, and when he left he kept shouting in the hall: "It's your fault; all your own fault."

MRS. FERRY

(*handing MAGGIE a letter*). A letter for Miss Ella.

MAGGIE

(*accepting the letter*). I'll give it to her as soon as she comes home. And what's the matter, Mrs. Ferry? You're smiling all over.

MRS. FERRY.

Mrs. Carver's brother in Montana sent a letter with a bank-check for fifteen hundred dollars. He struck it rich in the mine on

which he's been working so long, and wrote that he would be able to pay back in a short time all the money, which Carver advanced to Mrs. Carver's father.

MAGGIE.

Miss Ella will be awful glad to hear it; she thinks so much of Mr. and Mrs. Carver.

MRS. FERRY.

I told Mrs. Carver long ago that her brother might have luck yet, and now it turns out that I was right. And maybe I have also cause to smile on Miss Ella's account. Be careful that nobody sees the letter.

MAGGIE.

I'll look out for that.

MRS. FERRY

(departing through the door to the right).
I feel sure Miss Ella will find good news in it.

MAGGIE

(*after MRS. FERRY'S departure*). Just as if there wasn't good news in all the letters Mrs. Ferry brought lately. Every single one of them made Miss Ella the happiest person in the world,—and I'm sure they're all from Mr. Rector. My gracious, wouldn't there be a racket in the house, if the old man found it out?

Enter ELLA in street-apparel, through the door to the right.

ELLA RICHEY.

Papa came home with us and is resting in the parlor. Please see to it that he isn't disturbed.

MAGGIE.

Yes, Miss Ella, I will. (*Handing ELLA the letter.*) And Mrs. Ferry brought this letter.

ELLA RICHEY

(*accepting the letter and clasping MAGGIE'S hand with both hands*). Thank you, Maggie.

MAGGIE *departs* and ELLA RICHEY *opens the letter. As she reads she impresses a kiss upon it.*

Enter MARY RICHEY *through the door to the right.*

ELLA RICHEY

(in a jubilant voice). Alfred has returned. *(Kissing her aunt.)* He arrived last night, and is stopping at Mr. Ferry's. *(In a determined voice.)* I'll go there immediately and ask him to help papa.

MARY RICHEY.

Why, I'm sure Mr. Rector is the last man whose assistance your father desires. He may show him the door again.

ELLA RICHEY

(with flashing eyes). He shall help papa in spite of his protests, and then papa will get to know Alfred, *(Kissing her aunt.)* and to know Alfred is to love him. *(Again kissing her aunt.)* I feel so strange,—I

could laugh and cry,—all at the same time.
(*Departing through the door to the right.*)
And now I'll go to Alfred. (*Exit ELLA
RICHEY.*)

MARY RICHEY

(*after ELLA RICHEY'S departure*). Let
her follow the promptings of her faithful
heart.

*Enter WILEY through the door to the
right.*

WILEY

(*in a loud voice*). I want to see Richey.

MARY RICHEY.

He's not feeling well, Mr. Wiley, and is
lying down just now.

WILEY

(*in the same loud voice*). I've got to see
him on important business.

*Enter RICHEY. His appearance is hag-
gard, and he speaks in a broken and feeble
voice.*

RICHEY

(*as MARY RICHEY leaves the room, to WILEY*). How are you, Wiley? I thought you were still out of the city.

WILEY

(*excitedly*). I got a telegram informing me that gas stock dropped a hundred dollars per share.

Enter MAGGIE through the door to the right.

MAGGIE

(*to RICHEY*). Mr. Meacham.

RICHEY

(*to MAGGIE*). Tell him to come in.

Exit MAGGIE through the door to the right.

RICHEY.

He can tell you what happened.

Enter MEACHAM.

RICHEY

(seating himself on a chair, and motioning to the other two to seat themselves also, to MEACHAM). Tell Mr. Wiley the news about Plowman.

MEACHAM

(to WILEY). Plowman surrendered himself at the Police Station last night, and confessed that he set Carver's house on fire, and that Dickson had instigated him to do it.

WILEY

(to MEACHAM). Curse the luck!

MEACHAM

(to WILEY). Ferry overheard me making overtures to Carver, and threw me out of the house.

WILEY

(angrily). What!

MEACHAM.

The news of Plowman's confession spread like wildfire, and, after it reached the Council, which was in session, Carver had everything his own way. He now commands a majority of four votes, and there will be an extra session next Saturday to give him opportunity to submit plans for a municipal gas-plant. (*WILEY makes a significant gesture of extreme anger and disgust.*) Dickson was arrested this morning on a warrant sworn out by Carver, and is out on a five thousand dollar bond, which I procured for him.

WILEY

(*anxiously*). He must never go to trial.

RICHEY

(*to WILEY*). Under no circumstances. Through Meacham I gave Dickson five thousand dollars to get him away.

MEACHAM

(*to* RICHEY). When I handed the money to Dickson, he swore like a pirate, and said it wasn't enough, and that he'd see you about it.

WILEY

(*angrily, to* RICHEY). Your bungling is without precedent.

RICHEY

(*pointing to* MEACHAM, *to* WILEY). That man and Dickson over-reached themselves.

MEACHAM

(*angrily, to* RICHEY). I'm not responsible for Dickson's actions.

WILEY

(*to* RICHEY). What different result can be expected if you insist on having a Sing Sing graduate in your employ?

MEACHAM

(*to* RICHEY). But for your confounded picayunishness this never would have happened.

RICHEY

(*to* MEACHAM). Didn't I furnish everything you asked for?

MEACHAM

(*to* RICHEY). When I intimated to you several months ago, on the occasion of the passage of Wiley's street-car franchise, that I had gotten six of the silk-stockings into a receptive condition, and that they were willing to take more lots on Weston Street, did you place a single additional foot of ground at my disposal, or let me offer them any cold cash to boot? Had you exercised better judgment then, we could have nailed those six silk-stockings so tight, that Carver would never have succeeded in getting them loose.

RICHEY

(*brokenly, to MEACHAM*). From your own statements at the time, I thought that they were satisfied, and that—that we could depend upon them. I—I thought—

MEACHAM

(*sneeringly, to RICHEY*). Yes, you thought,—thought, but to-day I let you know, that four of the chumps have returned to me by mail the deeds for the lots on Weston Street.

WILEY

(*as RICHEY sinks back in his chair, to MEACHAM*). How can we get out of this muddle?

MEACHAM

(*to WILEY*). It will be absolutely impossible to do anything with the present City Council, and the only way to retain our contract, is to make the price of gas low enough to meet the approval of Carver.

Otherwise it can safely be predicted that before long the City will own and run its own gas-works.

WILEY

(rising, angrily to MEACHAM). The more I hear, the more I'm convinced that *(Pointing to RICHEY.)* that old fossil there is incapacitated for business. *(Exit WILEY through the door to the right.)*

MEACHAM

(after WILEY'S departure, to RICHEY). I confess that Carver's suit against the Insurance Company bothers me.

RICHEY

(to MEACHAM). You had no difficulty in inducing Case, Carver's attorney, to withdraw.

MEACHAM.

Rector is in town, and will, without doubt, conduct the suit from now on.

RICHEY.

Induce him to withdraw likewise, or at least not to molest us.

MEACHAM.

It would be useless to make the attempt. Rector is not only a close friend of Carver, but also a man of unflinching integrity.

RICHEY.

Is he a shrewd lawyer?

MEACHAM.

One of the brainiest young attorneys in the country, and Marshall, McNally and Richter, a prominent New York law firm, have taken him into partnership.

RICHEY.

Then we must arrange for Carver to get his insurance money, even if we have to pay it.

MEACHAM.

Rector will press the suit in any event, if for no other purpose than to vindicate Carver and to expose us. The thought that I have urgent business elsewhere is beginning to dawn forcibly upon my mind.

RICHEY

(*anxiously*). And leave us in the lurch?

MEACHAM.

Even if I remain it wouldn't save you from being put on the witness-stand.

RICHEY

(*anxiously*). I couldn't afford it.

MEACHAM.

If you're not prepared to flatly deny knowledge of anything and everything of an incriminating nature, my advice is that you skip also.

Enter MAGGIE through the door to the right.

MAGGIE.

Mr. Dickson.

RICHEY

(in surprise). What infernal impudence!

MEACHAM

(rising, to RICHEY). Don't let him bluff you.

RICHEY

(rising, to MEACHAM). You'll do me a favor, if you remain and hear what he has to say.

MEACHAM

I don't hanker after the society of an ex-convict.

RICHEY

(not heeding MEACHAM, to MAGGIE).
Tell the man to come in.

Exit MAGGIE *through the door to the right.*

MEACHAM

(*after* MAGGIE'S *departure, to* RICHEY). This business is becoming decidedly disagreeable, and I'm glad to sever my connection with it. (*Departing through the door to the right.*) Good-day, sir. (*Exit* MEACHAM.)

RICHEY

(*rising and pacing the floor after* MEACHAM'S *departure*). I hardly know where I stand.

Enter DICKSON *through the door to the right.*

RICHEY

(*angrily*). How dare you come here, you penitentiary bird? You ought to be sent up again.

DICKSON

(*angrily*). Isn't the penitentiary your legitimate home also? Of you and the likes

of you, who furnish the money, and hire others for the dirty work, which you haven't the courage to do yourselves, (*Looking down on RICHEY with contempt.*) You cowards. It is you, you prominent ones, you pretenders, you robbers under the forms of the law, you degenerates, with hearts of stone and without a vestige of moral power to resist the craving for everything in sight,—and for still more; it is you, who tempt anybody and everybody to sell their souls for you whenever it suits your purpose; not only poor devils like myself; you even make deliberate attempts to debauch the highest judicial tribunals, the fountains of justice. You are too cowardly though, to take any chances yourselves, and it was on account of frauds like you that I got into the penitentiary; but if I have to go there this time, I swear that you, (*Shaking his fist in RICHEY'S face.*) yes you, shall accompany me.

RICHEY.

How much do you want?

DICKSON.

Not a cent less than another five thousand dollars.

RICHEY

(seating himself at his desk and writing).
What guarantee have I that you won't come back in a few days and demand more?

DICKSON.

You'd have none, if my greed for gain were as inordinate as yours; but it is not; and, if I tell you that I'm satisfied with another five thousand dollars, you can depend on it that I mean what I say.

RICHEY

(handing a letter to DICKSON). Take this to Dodds, the treasurer of the Standard Gas Light Company. He'll give you the money.

DICKSON

(accepting the letter). Thanks, Mr. Richey, and it may not be out of the way to let you know, that most of this money will

be used to bring comfort, in her declining years, to the only person, who still bears affection for me,—my mother.

Exit DICKSON through the door to the right. After his departure, RICHEY, with an audible sigh, leans back in his chair.

Enter MARY RICHEY through the door to the left.

MARY RICHEY.

Brother.

RICHEY

(looking up). Let me alone.

MARY RICHEY.

You seem to be in distress.

RICHEY

(gruffly). Never mind.

MARY RICHEY.

Think of the days when we were children and confided all our childish woes to each

other. Imagine that we are children again, and that I come to you and ask: (*Putting her arms around RICHEY'S neck.*) What is the matter, brother dear?

RICHEY.

It is impossible for me to tell you my troubles. The more I endeavor to extricate myself from them, the more, I'm afraid, I shall become involved. My most intimate friends are down on me.

MARY RICHEY.

There are still three persons on whom you may rely,—Ella, myself, and—

RICHEY.

And?

MARY RICHEY.

Rector.

RICHEY

(*in surprise*). Rector? The man whom I insulted!

MARY RICHEY.

His love for Ella bars any feeling of resentment.

RICHEY

(*in surprise*). Does he still hope to marry her?

MARY RICHEY.

Why shouldn't he, when his love is so ardently reciprocated? He only went to New York, because he saw better prospects there to gain a position, that would enable him to support a wife.

RICHEY

(*in surprise*). What?

MARY RICHEY.

They have corresponded all the while. (*With a smile.*) Cupid, you know, laughs at all efforts to prevent loving hearts from communicating, and Rector probably loves Ella more than ever, after finding out what

a devoted daughter she is. She enlisted his aid in your behalf, as soon as she learned that he was in the City.

RICHEY.

Where,—where are they?

MARY RICHEY.

Not far away. (*Going to the door to the right.*) Come in, children.

Enter ELLA RICHEY and RECTOR through the door to the right.

RICHEY.

Ella,—Rector?

RECTOR

(*as MARY RICHEY leads him and ELLA RICHEY to RICHEY, to the latter*). Let by-gones be by-gones, Mr. Richey.

ELLA RICHEY

(*kissing her father*). Please, dear papa, let Alfred assist you in getting out of your business troubles.

RICHEY

(*to RECTOR*). I have to acknowledge that Mr. Carver has the advantage, and that our lighting contract with the City will only be renewed if we comply with his terms, and—I admit that they are fair.

ELLA RICHEY.

And let me tell you, papa, it was Mr. Carver who saved us from harm, perhaps even death, in that runaway accident, years ago.

RICHEY

(*in surprise*). Is it possible that he was the young man who stopped the horses and resolutely refused a reward?

ELLA RICHEY.

Yes, papa.

RICHEY

(*to* ELLA RICHEY). Then I must see him; I will call on him to-day.

RECTOR

(*to* RICHEY). He will be delighted, Mr. Richey.

RICHEY

(*to* RECTOR). I'm very sorry for having spoken to you as I did when you were here last. (*He stretches out his hand to* RECTOR).

RECTOR

(*clasping* RICHEY'S *hand*). It was presumptuous for me, a young, struggling attorney, to aspire to the hand of your daughter.

ELLA RICHEY

(*to* RECTOR). Please, Alfred, don't talk that way.

MARY RICHEY

(*to* ELLA RICHEY *and* RECTOR). If you commence to quarrel already, children, where will it end?

RECTOR

(*taking hold of* MARY RICHEY'S *hand*). In happiness and joy, with a guardian-angel like you near us.

ELLA RICHEY

(*kissing her aunt*). Dearest auntie!

MARY RICHEY

(*taking hold of the hands of* ELLA RICHEY *and* RECTOR *and leading them to* RICHEY, *to the latter*). They are worthy of each other.

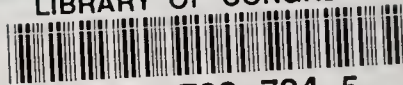
RICHEY

(grasping the hands of ELLA RICHEY and RECTOR, to ELLA). My daughter.
(To RECTOR.) My son. *(Joining the hands of ELLA RICHEY and RECTOR.)*
My children.

(The curtain drops.)

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